# Yorkshire Naturalists' Union

# ORNITHOLOGICAL REPORT for 1977

compiled by: John R. Mather

## Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Ornithological Section

### Officers for 1977

Chairman of the Ornithological Committee: H. T. James, Beverley Secretary: M. Densley, Rotherham

### Recorders:

V.C. 61-W. F. Curtis, 17 College Gardens, Hornsea. Tel. 2477.

V.C. 62—R. H. Appleby, 38 Tennyson Avenue, Scarborough. Tel. 63941.

V.C. 63-J. E. Dale, 158 Lindley Moor Road, Huddersfield. Tel. 52453.

V.C. 64-John R. Mather, 44 Aspin Lane, Knaresborough. Tel. 862775.

V.C. 65—B. Shorrock, 7 East View, Settle. Tel. 2776.

The recorders, together with A. J. Wallis (Secretary) form the Reports Committee.

### REPORT FOR 1977 Edited by John R. Mather

281 species were recorded during 1977, two of which were new to the county. These were Darford Warbler and White-crowned Sparrow. The former spent several days at Carlton Marsh, near Pontefract from 23rd March to 4th April and was caught and ringed. The latter was watched at Hornsea Mere on 22nd May and followed hot on the heels of the first for the British Isles at Fair Isle six days earlier. A Pied-billed Grebe at Gouthwaite Res. from 23rd April to 15th May, a Lesser Golden Plover at Faxfleet on 30th October and a Spotted Sandpiper near Knaresborough from 7th to 11th May were all second records for the county. After entering the Yorkshire list in 1976, Ring-necked Duck was represented by three individuals reflecting the national trend of frequency in recent years. I still question the validity of excluding Demoiselle Crane from the British list and one near Scarborough on 10th and 11th May when so many more species were overshooting was an exciting record.

Some selected species are mentioned in the following chronological summary, full details of which can be found in the classified list.

Coastal watchers did well in January. On the 3rd, 125 Red-throated Divers flew north at Scarborough with 185 on 23rd and 162 on 26th on which date 18 Black-throats flew north. The wintering flock of Great Crested Grebes off Fraisthorpe numbered 70 on the 8th. 365 Fulmars flew north off Flamborough on the 3rd, a Black-necked Grebe was on Tophill Low Res. from the 2nd to 11th and a Slavonian was at Filey on 15th. Wigeon were numerous in the Upper Humber and 4,500 were on the Wildfowl Refuge on the 16th and 5,300 on 30th. 120 Scaup were off the Kilnsea/Easington coast on the 16th/17th. A Bittern was at Weighton Lock on the 3rd and Hornsea Mere had singles on three dates. Spurn had good numbers of Velvet Scoters, 18 flying south on the 6th, 20 on 29th and 32 on 30th. Waders were at strength along the Humber and on the 16th there were 1,000 Bar-tailed Godwits, 32,000 Knot and 44,000 Dunlin, mainly in the Patrington to Easington stretch. Inland, there were 36 Whooper Swans at Fairburn in the early part of the month, 60 White-fronted Geese flew over Knaresborough on the 6th and a Woodlark was at Eccup Res. on the 7th.

February was good too and 17 Black-throated Divers flew north off Scarborough on 11th and one was inland at Southfield Res. from 13th to 19th. 500 Wigeon were on Cherry Cobb Sands during the month and Hornsea Mere had a peak of 130 Goldeneye on 25th. A duck Red-crested Pochard was at Thrybergh Res. on 6th and Hornsea Mere had single Bitterns on five dates. A Rough-legged Buzzard was at Leighton Res. on the 6th. 354 Sanderling on the Bridlington Sands on the 25th was a good number. Red-necked Grebes were at Filey and Scalby on 13th and 19th and a Slavonian was at Filey on 12th and 13th.

March saw the early migrants coming in, the first passerines being Chiffchaff and Sand Martin on the 9th, Swallow on 12th and Willow Warbler on 24th. The first Yorkshire Dartford Warbler appeared at Carlton Marsh on the 23rd and stayed into early April. The first Sandwich Tern was off Withernsea on 30th. A Crane was at Fairburn Ings on the 17th. The coast was still producing good records and 322 Red-throated Divers were off Spurn on 5th and 450 Fulmars flew north at Flamborough. Hornsea Mere had 165 Goldeneyes on 13th and a Bittern was seen on six dates. Teal peaked at Fairburn Ings (275) and on the Lower Derwent (700) as they passed through and single White Storks were at Penistone and Spurn on the 27th. A Black-bellied Dipper at Bempton on the 29th stayed into April and Scandinavian Rock Pipits were passing through at the month-end with seven at Hornsea Mere.

50 Velvet Scoters were in the Humber during early April and a Red-necked Grebe in full summer plumage was at Hornsea Mere on the 6th. A Crane stayed on the Lower Derwent for several days from the 24th and a White Stork was near Whitby on 16th. A Pied-billed Grebe at Gouthwaite Res. from the 23rd (until 15th May) gave many people pleasure as they converged on the area to see it. A Spotted Sandpiper near Knaresborough for five days from the 7th was the second county record. A Leach's Petrel was picked up on Broomhead Moor on the 24th. A Golden Eagle in Upper Nidderdale on the 3rd reappeared during mid-May. Single Rough-legged Buzzards were in Bilsdale and near Pickering on the 8th and 11th respectively. Large flocks of Fieldfares were evident during mid-month as they gathered prior to departure. A Serin was at Spurn on 23rd and a Whiskered Tern appeared there on the 24th and stayed to the month-end. A Savi's Warbler at Tophill Low Res. and a Redrumped Swallow at Hornsea Mere on 30th rounded off the month nicely.

May produced a flush of Nightingales led by one at Hornsea on the 1st, singles at Bempton on 6th and 29th, three at Spurn on 28th and one singing in the Valley Gardens at Harrogate on the same date. Savi's Warblers were at Flamborough from 15th to 19th, Hornsea Mere from 17th to 23rd and Blacktoft Sands from the 12th. A Subalpine Warbler was at Spurn on the 22nd on which date Hornsea Mere produced the first Yorkshire Record of the American White-crowned Sparrow. Examples of the thunbergi race of Yellow Wagtail were at Staveley Lagoon on 13th and Hornsea Mere on 15th. Three Great Northern Divers flew north at Flamborough on 14th. A Red-necked Grebe in summer plumage was at Brandesburton on the 8th when a Stone Curlew was at Spurn. A Little Egret was at Broomhill Flash on 24th and a Little Bittern at Hornsea Mere from 29th into June. Purple Herons were also involved with one at Fairburn Ings on the 7th and one at Tophill Low Res. on 22nd. A Spoonbill at Blacktoft Sands on the 31st completed this remarkable series of 'herons'. A Ruddy Duck was at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 15th and a Ring-necked Duck at Newmillerdam on the 31st. The only records of Montagu's Harrier were all in May; two at Blacktoft on 10th and singles at Flamborough on 19th and Barden Moor on 22nd. The only Hoopoe was on the north-east moors on the 18th and a Short-toed Lark was at Spurn on the 28th. Ospreys were seen at ten places during the month and a few passed into early June.

The arrival of southern warblers at the end of May continued into June and Spurn had a Great Reed Warbler on the 3rd and a Marsh Warbler on the 4th. A White-winged Black Tern at Tophill Low Res. on the 7th and a Collared Pratincole at Blacktoft Sands on the 11th were no doubt part of the same influx. Shearwaters started to pass during the month and Flamborough had 105 Sooties going north on the 6th with Spurn and Scarborough producing good numbers up to mid-month. A Cory's was at Withernsea on the 7th and Flamborough on the 19th and Little Shearwaters flew north at Flamborough on the 11th and 26th. A Scarlet Rosefinch sang at Gouthwaite Res. on the 25th and a Purple Heron was in the Ribble Valley at Selside on the 26th.

July had a sprinkling of rare birds; a Red Kite at Keighley on 10th and a Roller at Ripley on 15th. Single Pectoral Sandpipers were at Tophill Low Res. on 23rd and Potteric Carr on 28th. Manx Shearwaters were passing in good numbers off Flamborough with 147 on 7th and 109 on 28th as maxima.

August was notable for shearwaters with Cory's being seen at Filey on 7th, Flamborough on 12th and Spurn on 30th. 700 Gannets flew north at Flamborough on 7th. Single Little Shearwaters were at Filey on 9th and Flamborough on 27th and Great Shearwaters were off

Flamborough on 19th and 28th. Sooties were evident at the month-end with maxima of 72 at Flamborough on 27th and 120 on 28th. A Storm Petrel was at Scarborough on 19th. It was a good time for warblers from mid-month and Icterine and Barred featured well along the coast with Greenish at Flamborough from 21st to 23rd and one Aquatic at Spurn on 21st and 22nd. There was an Ortolan Bunting at Flamborough on the 20th and a Scarlet Rose-finch at Spurn on 30th. A very early Rough-legged Buzzard was on Barden Moor on 7th August and was seen at close range. A juvenile White-winged Black Tern was at Hornsea Mere on 23rd and an adult on 30th with a juvenile at Blacktoft Sands on 25th and 26th. A Dotterel at Ingbirchworth on 23rd was the forerunner of several in September. Spotted Crakes were at two localities on 14th and 28th. The 27th was a spectacular skua day when 463 Arctics were at Spurn, 182 at Filey, 139 at Hornsea and 769 at Flamborough.

September was an exciting month and produced the best seawatching day of the autumn on the 17th including 2,000 Gannets at Flamborough, 640 at Hornsea, 433 at Filey and 650 at Spurn. Sooty Shearwaters were in good numbers with 269 at Flamborough and 221 at Spurn. Single Storm Petrels were at Scarborough and inland at Scammonden Dam and there was a Leach's at Spurn after one on 12th and another on 18th when Flamborough had two Great Shearwaters and Hornsea had two Cory's. Hornsea Mere had a Night Heron on 2nd and Wintersett Res. had two Ruddy Ducks on 10th. A Honey Buzzard was at Gouthwaite Res. on 10th and single Buzzards flew south along the coast on 16th and 26th. Fairburn Ings had a Pectoral Sandpiper on 18th and there was a Red-necked Phalarope at Hornsea Mere on 25th on which date a Subalpine Warbler was seen at Burniston. Dotterels at Spurn on 9th, Fairburn Ings on 10th, Great Shunner Fell on 15th and Chelker Res. on 28th indicated the trend of increased frequency. A few Yellow-browed Warblers appeared during the latter part of the month and Firecrests were at three coastal localities on the 25th and 26th. Spurn had an Ortolan Bunting on the 24th and two were at Flamborough on 30th and Red-breasted Flycatchers were recorded at five places from the 19th. Slavonian Grebes were inland near Knaresborough at the month-end and one in breeding dress at Bolton-on-Swale on 11th. A duck American Wigeon was at Fairburn Ings on 17th and there were two Ruddy Ducks at Wintersett Res. on 10th. A Buff-breasted Sandpiper was at Ringstone Edge Res. from 13th

October started well with a Honey Buzzard at Hornsea on 1st, a Rough-legged Buzzard in Tripsdale and two at Strensall on the 2nd but no more of the latter were to follow. Two Cranes flew south at Hornsea on the 1st and one was at Haxby, near York from the 8th to 17th. A Pectoral Sandpiper was at Tophill Low Res. from 12th to 29th and single Redrumped Swallows were at Spurn on 22nd and 25th and a Richard's Pipit from the 16th to 25th. A male Ortolan Bunting was near Scarborough on the 10th and a Pallas's Warbler was

caught inland at Blackmoorfoot Res. on the 12th.

November saw several grebes and divers at inland waters; a Black-throated Diver at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 5th, a Red-throated at Castle Howard from 24th to 27th, Slavonian Grebes at Knaresborough on 13th, Eccup on 17th and Knotford Nook on 23rd. Red-necked Grebes were at Scalby and Sandsend on 20th and one at Bridlington on 22nd. Knotford Nook G.P. had a Ferruginous Duck on 5th and 6th and again on 20th and two were at Castle Howard on 13th. A Ruddy Duck was at Worsborough Res. on 20th and 30th. Spurn had yet another Red-rumped Swallow on 13th and 7,000 Guillemots flew north at Flamborough on 18th. Late Swifts were at Scarborough on 7th and Spurn on 13th. A few Longeared Owls were coming in along the coast at the month-end. Two late Wheatears were on the Humber Refuge on the 3rd and a Whinchat at Thorne on 6th.

Two Red-necked Grebes were at Flamborough on 10th December following one at Scalby on 3rd. A Red-throated Diver was inland at Wintersett Res. on 7th and single Great Northerns at Eccup Res. on 24th and Chelker Res. on 28th. Fairburn Ings had a Ringnecked Duck on 18th and single Red-crested Pochards were at Hornsea on 11th and Potteric Carr on 18th. The Humber Wildfowl Refuge held 5,000 Wigeon on the 18th, the highest ever total for the area and Hornsea Mere's Goldeneye flock peaked at 100 on 22nd. Mallard built-up at several inland waters during the month with a total of 9,500 at Eccup Res., Potteric Carr, Castle Howard Lake, Hornsea Mere and the Humber Refuge with many more scattered at smaller waters. A party of five Waxwings on a TV aerial in Scalby on the

2nd was the only flock of the winter.

My thanks must go to all the observers who have contributed to this report, either through their local societies or directly to the vice-county recorders. We are very much aware that some records do not reach us and some interesting birds will be seen by people not involved in the current scene, but hopefully the final picture is somewhere near the truth. I must also thank Ray Hawley and Dave Braithwaite for their drawings which have become a welcome feature of this report.

John R. Mather, Chairman, Reports Committee, October 1979



### Classified List

All the rare and unusual species in the following report have been considered by the Reports Committee and found acceptable on the written evidence supplied by the observers and have also been accepted by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee where applicable.

The sequence used is that of the 1952 B.O.U. Check List of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland as amended, and published by the British Trust for Ornithology in A Species List of British and Irish Birds 1971. The nomenclature follows that of The Status of Birds in Britain and Ireland, B.O.U. 1971.

- D. Braithwaite drew the Bittern, Hobby, Smew, Short-eared Owl, Red-rumped Swallow, Montagu's Harrier, Firecrest, and Goshawk.
  - R. G. Hawley drew the Great Crested Grebe, Cormorants, Little Bittern, and Jack Snipe.

### Black-throated Diver Gavia arctica

Recorded along the coast from Spurn northwards with the modern trend of frequency being maintained. The main months of occurrence were January to March and November/December but Flamborough had singles on 6th and 11th June (DIMW) with three on 18th September (PAL) when four were also off Hornsea (WFC). Four at Hornsea on 21st September could well have been the same birds and there were five there on 22nd (WFC. RGH). Five went north off Flamborough on 25th September and four on 31st December (DIMW). 18 flew north off Scarborough on 26th January including one party of five (RHA) and 17 flew north between 0945 and 1145 hours on 11th February including one party of five (SCM. SR).

One occurred inland at Southfield Res. from 13th to 19th February (CW. TB. et al) and one at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 5th November (MLD. PDB. et al).

### Great Northern Diver Gavia immer

Well distributed along the coast from January to May and September to year-end. Single birds were usual but two on several dates off the Hornsea/Flamborough stretch with three flying north on 14th May at the latter (PAL. IS) and four flying south there on 20th November (DIMW). One or two were along the Scarborough coast during the period. A juvenile on a small pond at Withernsea Promenade on 21st November was found dead on 23rd. It proved to be a male and had cankerous growths in the throat (SML. HMF. JRM).

One was inland at Eccup Res. on 24th December (SPS. IHD) and one was on Chelker Res. on 28th December (FAW).

### Red-throated Diver Gavia stellata

Recorded along the coast in all months: January to March was the period of peak activity. 125 flew north off Scarborough in three hours on 3rd January (MF). Large numbers feeding in Robin Hood's Bay on 9th with 50 on the sea and much activity in and out of the bay (JHL). 185 north off Scarborough on 23rd January with a further 20 in the South Bay and 162 flying north on the 26th (RHA. MF). 95 flew north off Filey in two hours on 15th January (AP. FJT). Other places had counts of up to 50/60 during this period and a second movement took place in late February/March with 78 in Filey Bay on 13th February, 72 off Withernsea on 8th March and 322 at Spurn on 5th March when up to 70 were on the sea at times. Numbers at the year-end did not exceed 55 which were at Flamborough on 17th September (PAL. IS). Only low single figures occurred during May/June.

Inland occurrences were one at Gouthwaite Res. in summer plumage on 5th August (AS), one at Castle Howard Lake from 24th to 27th November (PH. BGP. et al) and one at Wintersett Res. on 7th December (PBW).

### Great Crested Grebe Podiceps cristatus

The Fraisthorpe/Barmston coastal wintering area had a maximum of 70 on 8th January (IF). Elsewhere along the coast records were very few.

12 pairs bred at Hornsea Mere but success was very poor and only ca three young reached the flying stage.

ca 20 waters in V.C. 63 had a total of 47 breeding pairs which reared 79 young some of which did not survive the autumn.

At least 32 pairs bred in V.C. 64 but success was low and seven pairs at Fairburn Ings produced only seven young. One pair reared one young at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. in V.C. 65 (GDM).



### Red-necked Grebe Podiceps griseigena

One at Spurn on 17th September flew north. One in Filey Bay on 13th February (DEM), one at Scalby Mills on 19th February (BEP), one at Hornsea Mere in full breeding plumage from 6th–9th April (RGH. et al) and one in similar garb at Brandesburton G.P. on 8th May (MJS).

Two off Hornsea on 22nd September (WFC. RGH), singles at Bridlington on 22nd and 25th November (DIMW), singles at Sandsend and Scalby Mills on 20th November (DJB. BEP) and at the latter on 3rd December (BEP) with two at Flamborough on 10th December and one on 31st (DIMW).

### Slavonian Grebe Podiceps auritus

One in Filey Bay on 15th January (CDRH. GED) and one on 12th and 13th February (RHA. AP. et al), one off Hornsea in almost full breeding plumage on 19th August (WFC), two on Hornsea Mere on 11th September (RGH. et al) and two at Bridlington on 21st November (DIMW).

Inland records were exceptionally more numerous than coastal ones: An adult at Hay-a-Park G.P. from 23rd September to 1st October (PTT. et al) and a juvenile on 13th November (RE. et al), one at Eccup Res. on 17th November (CY), one at Knotford Nook G.P. on 23rd November (GTF) and one at Allerton Bywater from 25th December to year-end (SCM. et al). One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 11th September was in almost complete breeding dress (GDM).

Black-necked Grebe Podiceps nigricollis

One at Tophill Low Res. on 2nd January stayed until the 11th (DJB. PJI. et al). One at Hornsea Mere on 5th/6th November (RGH. et al).

One was at Scammonden Dam from 20th-26th August (JE. SMD. et al). Addition to 1976 Report: Two at Mickletown Ings on 19th September (BT).

Pied-billed Grebe Podilymbus podiceps

One was located at Gouthwaite Res. on 23rd April by A. and J. Denison. It remained until 15th May and was seen by very many people from all over the country. The *second* county record.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Fulmar Fumaris glacialis

365 flying north in one hour at Flamborough on 3rd January (DIMW) were not witnessed at Spurn or elsewhere, nor were 450 at Flamborough on 6th March (DIMW). This illustrates well the importance of the headland as a vantage point for sea watching and these passages are perhaps explained by a great circular movement of birds passing Flamborough Head at their nearest point to land. Such birds would not be visible from the Holderness coast or from the Scarborough area.

4,500 flew north off Flamborough in seven hours on 17th September (PAL. IS) when 680 were seen at Spurn. Up to 400 per hour were passing south at Filey on 4th December and 1,650 flew north in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours at Flamborough on 31st December (DIMW). None was recorded at Spurn in December.

A blue phase bird flew north at Spurn on 27th March, three on 18th September and one at Scarborough on 19th September (RHA).

Eight pairs were inland at Stoupe Brow Quarry on 18th May (JW). One flew north over Danby Dale on 29th May (GWF) and a pair were at Hasty Bank in June (JA).

Two were over Blacktoft Sands on 14th June (AG), one over Knaresborough Ringing Station on 16th June (RE), one at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 3rd July (MLD) and one over Newton Ings on 24th September (PK).

Cory's Shearwater Calonectris diomedea

There were eight records this year following the exceptional number of 20 in 1976. One flying south at Withernsea on 17th June (SML), one flying north at Flamborough on 19th June (DIMW), one at Filey on 7th August (AP), one flying north at Flamborough on 12th August (AG), one off Hornsea on 16th August (DPS), one at Spurn on 30th August and two singles flying north at Hornsea on 18th September (WFC).

All accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Manx Shearwater Puffinus puffinus

One at Spurn on 12th February was the only bird in the first three months until one at Filey on 27th March (HJW). The next was at Spurn on 5th April whereafter a few were seen up to June when passing birds were regular through to September. 105 flew north in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours at Flamborough on 6th June (DIMW), the most in one day during the period but there were

up to ca 60 on a few other days and Spurn had up to 87 during the first week and 114 flew south off Scarborough on the 10th (SML). Birds passed throughout July and peaked again in August off Flamborough with 147 on 7th and 109 on 28th (PAL. IS). Filey recorded 59 on 18th August when 80 flew north at Flamborough (GED) and Spurn had 61 on 27th as maximum counts. Numbers were evident during September with a marked movement during mid-month when there were 85 at Spurn, 67 off Hornsea, 54 off Flamborough, and ca 30 off Scarborough on the 17th with smaller numbers passing next day. No more were seen after 18th September except for one off Hornsea on 5th October (WFC).

One was up river at Blacktoft Sands on 31st August (SH. TE). One was found inland near

Castleford on 12th September and later released at Bempton.

Birds showing characters of the Balearic race *P.p. mauretanicus* were seen as follows: one at Flamborough on 11th June (DIMW), two at Burniston on 27th July and one on 18th August (MF), one at Flamborough on 30th July with two there on 13th and 19th August, one on 27th, six on 28th, five on 11th September and one on 1st October (PAL. IS).

A bird showing characters of the race P.p. yelkonan was seen off Flamborough on 28th

August and another on 11th September (PAL. IS).

Little Shearwater Puffinus assimilis

There were four records of this species which did not enter the county list until 1976: one flying north off Flamborough on 11th June (DIMW) and another on 26th June (DIMW); one flying south at Filey on 9th August (PJD. AP) and one flying north at Flamborough on 27th August, the latter being claimed as *P.a.baroli* (PAL. IS).

All accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Great Shearwater Puffinus gravis

Singles flew north at Flamborough on 19th August, 28th August, 3rd September, and 18th September (PAL. IS).

Sooty Shearwater Puiffinus griseus

Singles at Flamborough on 20th March (PAL. IS. DIMW) and at Filey on 11th June (PJO. AP) were the only ones before late July when the normal movements started. The first were two at Burniston on 21st July whereafter Spurn northwards to Scarborough had birds passing on most days to mid-September. Small numbers of up to ca 25 birds were seen on several August dates with 41 at Flamborough on 6th, 72 on 27th and 120 on 28th and 33 at Spurn on 27th as maxima.

After 90 flying north off Burniston in 2½ hours on 16th September (MF), a large movement occurred on the 17th when Spurn had 221, Flamborough 269 (PAL. DIMW), Hornsea 194 (WFC. JEA), Scarborough 36 (DJB), Burniston 13 and Ravenscar 44 (RHA). All flew north.

Smaller numbers were evident up to 21st September and some late birds occurred: one at Spurn on 1st October and two on 2nd, one at Flamborough on 18th November (PAL. IS) and Filey on 26th November.

Storm Petrel Hydrobates pelagicus

One flew south close inshore at Scarborough on 19th August (RHA) and one was watched there on 17th September as it flitted around a buoy for  $ca \frac{1}{2}$  hour (DJB).

One was inland at Scammonden Dam on 17th September (J and BP).

### Leach's Petrel Oceanodroma leucorrhoa

Singles flew north off Spurn on 12th, 17th and 18th September.

One was picked up on Broomhead Moor on 24th April. It died later and is now preserved in the Sheffield City Museum.

### Gannet Sula bassana

The Bempton colony continues to increase with 25 new breeding birds. 169 nests produced 136 eggs from which 121 chicks hatched and 112 fledged. Of the nine chicks lost, five were tethered to their nests with nylon cord (Miss JF. HOB. SR).

700 were off Flamborough on 7th August (PAL. IS). The 17th September was a spectacular day for seabird passage (see Fulmar and Sooty Shearwater) and Gannets were well represented: 640 at Hornsea (JEA. WFC), 2,000 at Flamborough (PAL. IS), 433 at Filey (HJW. AP) and 650 at Spurn. All flew north and included many juveniles. Passage continued at a reduced rate until early October.

The main direction of movement is to the north but some big numbers passed south; 332 off Hornsea in three hours on 16th September (WFC) and 280 off Burniston on 25th September (MF). 106 flying north off Flamborough on 8th January were not seen elsewhere (DIMW). See Fulmar.

An immature flew inland at Blacktoft Sands on 15th October and an adult was found in a field at Hebden Bridge on 1st October (KGS).

### Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo

34 birds were on ledges at the Ravenscar colony on 16th July (RHA). 23 nests were counted on the cliffs to the north of Filey Brigg (BC). A peak count of 80 at Flamborough on 18th November after up to ca 20 during the autumn (PAL. DIMW). The maximum at Hornsea Mere was 60 in December (RGH).

Birds were seen at many inland waters in every month, April/May and October producing the most records. The majority were of single birds but up to four occurred on several dates and five at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 17th May (GDM).



Shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Breeding birds at Bempton were considered to be more numerous than previously with 135 on the sea at the foot of the cliffs in mid-September (SR). Flamborough recorded large numbers: 120 on 17th September, 130 on 30th September (PAL. IS), 260 on 8th October (SML), 155 on 16th October (PAL. IS), 345 flying south on 22nd October (PAL. IS) and 150 on 18th November (PAL). These figures are exceptional. Spurn also recorded more than usual with 36 flying north on 2nd September and 25 flying south on 27th November as maxima.

38 flew north in three hours at Burniston on 20th February (MF), 37 were in Filey Bay on 23rd February (SML), and 80 were on the sea off Scarborough on 26th February (MF).

One at Tophill Low Res. on 4th January (GED) and one at Damflask Res. on 5th October (RW).

Grey Heron Ardea cinerea

Relatively scarce at Hornsea Mere with one or two birds seen on only 32 days during the year (RGH). Generally widespread throughout the county outside the breeding season occurring mainly singly at most waters and along rivers, but some concentration at favoured places in the non-breeding season: 12 at Fairburn Ings on 31st July, 17 at Bolton-on Swale G.P. on 12th September and up to 14 at Gouthwaite Res. on several dates. One was eating a Moorhen at the latter locality on 22nd January (PJC). Birds on the coast in spring and autumn are no doubt migrants and Spurn had several passing north in spring and south in autumn with one seen coming in over the sea on 31st August. Filey had three birds in September, October and November, the latter passing up the coast.

Breeding was only sporadically reported but suggested a good population. 25 pairs at the Kiplin Wood site in V.C. 65 (and ca 20 pairs near Sedbergh, now in Cumbria). 12 pairs at a site near Ripon, seven pairs in Wharfedale, three in Nidderdale and one pair in Kirklees Park.

One pair hatched a chick at Mowthorpe, near Scarborough – a new site.

Purple Heron Ardea purpurea

One at Fairburn Ings on 17th May (BT). One was at Tophill Low Res. on 22nd May (PD). One near Selside in Upper Ribblesdale on 26th June (FJR).

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Little Egret Egretta garzetta

One at Broomhill Flash on 24th May (JH. et al). Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Night Heron Nycticorax nycticorax

One at Hornsea Mere on 2nd September (RGH). Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Little Bittern Ixobrychus minutus

A male at Hornsea Mere from 29th May to 11th June (GRB. RGH. et al). Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.



### Bittern Botaurus stellaris

One at Weighton Lock on 3rd January (DIMW). Occurred singly at Hornsea Mere on three dates in January, five in February, six in March and on single dates in October and November (RGH. et al). One at Newton Ings on 3rd January (per CW). One at Denaby Ings from 15th January to 4th April was seen by many observers.

### White Stork Ciconia ciconia

One at Millhouses, near Penistone in V.C. 63 on 27th and 28th March (CB. DJS. AA). One was at Spurn on 27th March (CEA. NJ. et al). One south of Whitby on 16th April (IE). All accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

### Spoonbill Platalea leucorodia

One flew east down the River Humber at Blacktoft Sands on 31st May (AG).

Mallard Anas platyrhynchos

The spectacular numbers which occur each autumn must be augmented from the continent. The favoured waters held the usual numbers and the larger concentrations were at Eccup Res. in January (1,000), November (1,400), December (1,500); Fairburn Ings in September (1,200), Castle Howard from September to year-end (1,000), Potteric Carr in early December (1,000), Hornsea Mere in January (1,650), November (1,180) and December (1,500). 1,500 were on the upper Humber (Weighton Lock to Blacktoft) on 5th November with 750 there on 18th December (DIMW). Leighton Res., always a popular water for this species had a low maximum of 900 in October/November (PJC). 1,000 were at Blacktoft Sands on 31st August and 970 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 11th September (GDM). 4,570 were on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 31st December (per ACh).

15 pairs reared 97 young on Wath Ings.

### Teal Anas crecca

Large flocks occurred at the more suitable waters with maxima as follows: Fairburn Ings 340 on 8th January, 275 on 13th March after a reduction in the interim, 410 on 29th September and 560 on 14th December. Gouthwaite Res., a popular water for Teal, had 550 on 5th November. The Lower Derwent attracted 250 in February, 700 in March (passage) and 600 from October to year-end with a peak of 1,000 on 2nd November. Hornsea Mere's maximum counts were 160 in October, 290 in November and 370 in December. Thrybergh Res. had 420 on 3rd January and Wath Ings had 300 in February and in December.

Potteric Carr had the largest inland count with 600 on 27th November.

950 were on the Upper Humber on 25th October and 1,100 on 30th October (DIMW). 1,300 were in the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 3rd November (ACh). Maxima at Blacktoft Sands were 310 on 20th October, plus 360 on 2nd November. Spurn had good numbers in autumn with a maximum of 314 on 31st October.

11 broods totalling 66 ducklings were on Gouthwaite Res. on 11th June.

Ducks were moving on the coast on 17th September, a good sea passage day and 60 flew north at Burniston from 0700 to 1415 hours (MF) with 20 moving next day.

### Garganey Anas querquedula

No breeding reports were received for the second year in succession.

The earliest record was of a pair at Tophill Low Res. on 14th and 20th March (NAB. GED), where there were single drakes on 9th and 29th May (KR. DJB). The next three were at Fairburn Ings on 1st April. A drake flew south at Flamborough on 17th April (PAL. IS). A pair on Potteric Carr on 3rd April and at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 15th May. Single males were on the Lower Derwent on 28th April, Blacktoft Sands in May and June and Broomhill

Flash in May. Three birds (two drakes) frequented Scout Dyke and Royd Moor Reservoirs from 6th to 21st August with one up to 11th September. Wath Ings had one from 12th to 20th August, two on 21st and one to two up to 6th September. A drake at Hornsea Mere on 19th May, two on 2nd July, one on 6th August and two on 21st August. Two were at Fairburn Ings from 13th to 27th August and a duck was on Easington Lagoons on 4th September (DPS), Singles flew south at Spurn on 31st August and 10th September. One at Worsborough Res. from 13th September to 3rd October.

Gadwall Anas strepera

Numbers at Hornsea Mere were ca 10 per cent down on 1976 and there was no evidence of breeding other than birds displaying in spring (RGH). Away from the Mere, records in V.C. 61 were few, except for the Lower Derwent where there were up to 12 from February to November. V.C. 62 had only five records including a party of 16 at Scampston (CRC). V.C. 63 had birds at nine waters with Mickletown Ings having the most and a maximum of 13 on 4th December. A pair reared ten young on Wintersett Res. Two pairs were introduced into Newmillerdam by the S. Yorks. Wildfowl Association and one pair reared four young. V.C. 64 had records from ten waters, Fairburn and Swillington Ings producing most birds. Fairburn Ings had 18 during January/February, a post-breeding season increase to 14 on 31st July, 31 on 27th August, 64 on 18th September, 48 in October decreasing to 34 by year-end. Swillington Ings had 12 on 22nd October and 26 on 13th November. Numbers elsewhere did not exceed five birds. V.C. 65 had one record of five at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 18th September (GDM).

Wigeon Anas penelope

Good numbers recorded with the Humber estuary accommodating many birds: 250 to 500 at Cherry Cobb Sands during January/February (BSP. JEA). The Estuary Count (Spurn to Goole) gave a total of 4,900 on 16th January, 4,500 of which were on the Wildfowl Refuge (per DBC), 5,300 on Broomfleet Island on 30th January (BSP). 1,150 in the estuary on 13th February, mostly at Cherry cobb Sands and on the Refuge (per DBC). At the year-end, 540 had returned to the upper Humber on 25th October (DIMW). The Estuary Count on 18th December showed 5,500, 5,000 of which were on the Refuge and its highest ever total (per ACh).

770 at Hornsea Mere on 6th January and 330 on 31st December (RGH). 750 at Lambwath on 3rd January (WFC). 360 at Hempholme (River Hull) on 15th January (DIMW). 360 at Tophill Low Res. on 19th January (NAB. GED) and 440 on 22nd February (JEA).

Coastal movements on 17th September, one of the best autumn days for sea-watching, was witnessed at Hornsea, Filey, Burniston and Ravenscar with 158, 114, 365 and 194 respectively. All flew north. Others were passing next day.

Spurn had southward movement on several autumn dates with maxima of 114 on 27th

September and 273 on 31st October. 68 also came in off the sea on the first date.

Inland flocks were numerous and large with the Lower Derwent holding 3,000 in January, 1,000 in March, 3,000 on 12th March, 700 on 6th April and 1,500 from October to year-end (GS. et al).

Fairburn Ings has become more suitable for Wigeon with the recent subsidence and had maxima of 40 in early January, 72 on 29th, 65 on 6th February, 56 on 5th March falling to three by month-end. In autumn there were 47 on 17th September, 60 on 20th September and 82 on 9th October. Eccup Res. had maxima of 53 on 2nd January and 47 on 28th November and Gouthwaite Res. had 53 on 5th November.

V.C. 63, not by nature a Wigeon area except in the Upper Humber, had maxima of up to 49 but generally fewer birds at 14 waters. 350 were at Blacktoft Sands on 7th January and 150 on 30th. Maximum at the year-end was 63 in September.

628 were at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. in V.C. 65 on 30th January.

American Wigeon Anas americana

A duck was at Fairburn Ings on 17th September (SCM. et al). There were two records in 1976, a drake at Fairburn Ings in July/August and one at Whitton Sands in September.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Pintail Anas acuta

The Humber estuary had 100 on 13th February and 300 on 18th December, mainly in the Stone Creek area (per DBC). Hornsea Mere had more birds than usual with peaks of 23 on 18th September, 93 and 83 on 23rd and 29th October respectively. Blacktoft Sands had maxima of 45 on 30th September and 38 flying west on 12th October.

Inland birds were much fewer and only the Lower Derwent valley could muster more than single figures with 80 on 6th February, an isolated peak. Elsewhere, as last year, widely scat-

tered over the county in low single figures mainly in the autumn.

15 flew south off Filey and 17 off Hornsea on 25th September (MGR. JEA). The same birds were probably involved. 19 flew north in one flock off Hornsea on 9th October (SML).

Shoveler Anas clypeata

Fairburn Ings had maxima in the early months of 74 on 1st January. 30–40 during February. 75 on 9th March and 30–40 thereafter to early summer. In autumn, 133 had assembled by 31st August, 170 on 11th September, 256 by 25th September, 100 to 170 during October and 70 in November/December. As with other waterfowl, breeding success was very poor due to high water levels (SCM). Hornsea Mere had early maxima of 55 in March, then ca 25 during the summer with only singles in August before a build-up to 45 in September, 910 in October, 140 in November and 110 in December. There was no evidence of breeding (RGH).

200 at Wheldrake Ings on the Lower Derwent on 1st January (RHO) and ca 30 from end March to mid-April. A build-up in September and 150 present from October to year-end (BGP. DB). 75 were at Potteric Carr on 27th September and 70 on 27th October. Numbers

at other waters were much smaller but widespread.

Red-crested Pochard Netta rufina

One at Hornsea Mere on 9th October and one on 11th December (SML, RGH). A duck at Throxenby Mere, Scarborough from 30th September to 16th October (MF, et al).

A duck at Thrybergh Tip on 6th February (PC. et al) and a duck at Potteric Carr on 18th December (LJD). A drake at Newton Ings from 14th to 27th September was very wary (SCM).

Scaup Aythya marila

V.C. 63 had birds at 16 waters from January to March and June to December, mainly singly and mostly during August to December. Four were at Wintersett Res. on 1st May. V.C. 64 had one to two birds at ten waters during the same periods. A duck stayed on the Lower Derwent from January to 1st May. Tophill Low Res. had a drake during May and a duck from 20th November to year-end. Hornsea Mere had single birds on several dates during the winter months but five drakes on 13th July and seven including five ducks on 22nd October (RGH).

Coastal records were scarce as usual except for the Humber estuary: 40 at Easington on 8th January (SML), 120 at Kilnsea/Easington on 16th and 17th January, 28 on 12th/13th February, 55 on 5th March and 35 on 26th March. Maximum at the year-end was 11 in

November.

Tufted Duck Aythya fuligula

V.C. 62 had broods of eight and three at Seamer Road Mere on 19th July and 24 young birds there on 8th August (RHA. MF). Breeding reported from V.C. 63 showed the following: Wath Ings, 4 pairs, 24 young; Walton Hall, 2 pairs, ten young; Wentworth Lakes, eight pairs, 51 young; Southfield Res., two pairs, 18 young; Denaby Ings, 35 pairs, young not counted; Middletown Ings, six pairs, 31 young; Barnsley area, six pairs, 40 young. This sort of coverage is very useful and encouraging. V.C. 64 had at least 64 broods at ca 12 waters. Included were 32 broods at Fairburn Ings totalling 188 ducklings and 14 broods at Staveley Lagoon. In contrast, Hornsea Mere had only one brood. Six pairs on the Lower Derwent had 12 ducklings on 29th June (GS. et al) and two pairs bred at Wiginthorpe Pond, York. A brood of eight at Faxfleet Pond on 3rd September (GED). Many broods in the Knaresborough/Staveley gravel pit complex did not appear until late July, a month later than usual. One pair bred at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. in V.C. 65.

Hornsea Mere held big flocks with maxima of 470 in February, 320 in March, 310 in April, ca 140 during May to July, 450 in September, 590 in October, 480 in November and 640 in December (RGH). Fairburn Ings had 200 to 375 during the early months with 475 on 25th September and up to 410 to year-end. Wintersett Res. had 385 on 8th January and 250 on 3rd December as its maxima. Several other waters in V.C.s 63 and 64 held up to 100 birds and a few up to 200.

Ring-necked Duck Aythya collaris

A drake was at Newmillerdam on 31st May (PS. GJS). On 18th December, a drake was at Fairburn Ings (SCM) and a drake also occurred at Tophill Low Res. on same date (MC. AG. KR. AW).

All accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Pochard Aythya ferina

Breeding reports are scarce and the only waters involved were Hornsea Mere, two broods, four ducklings; Fairburn Ings, 14 broods, 44 ducklings; Mickletown Ings, three broods, 12 ducklings. Also bred on the Lower Derwent but no details submitted.

Maxima at Hornsea were 30 to 80 during January to May, 95 in June building up from September (155) to 350 in October and ca 200 at year-end. Fairburn Ings had 407 on 3rd January and 200 to 250 from July to year-end. ca 460 were on the Lower Derwent during the winter months. Maxima at the several other waters holding good numbers in the non-breeding season were 167 at Thrybergh Res. on 1st December, 150 at Southfield Res. in mid-October and 111 on Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 17th October.

99 flew south at Spurn on six October dates with 67 of these on the 31st and 15 on 2nd November.

Ferruginous Duck Aythya nyroca

A duck at Knotford Nook on 5th and 6th November (FAW. DMP. KM) and again on 20th (FAW). Two ducks were on Castle Howard Lake on 13th November (CBT). Full details were submitted for these birds which are published with the escape proviso.

Goldeneye Bucephala clangula

Hornsea Mere held good numbers during the winter months: 80 on 22nd January, 95 on 6th February, 130 on 25th February, 165 on 13th March, 210 on 4th April, decreasing to 100 by 16th and seven on 30th. Small numbers occurred on 24 dates in May with nine on 4th and 6th and 23 dates in June (max. five), odd ones occurred in September and October but not daily until 20th. 95 by 27th November and 100 on 22nd December (RGH).

Nowhere else did numbers reach such proportions and other maxima were 53 at Wintersett Res. on 8th January, 76 at Fairburn Ings on 6th March, a high number for this water,

falling to 54 by 2nd April. 18 on 22nd November was the year-end maximum. The many other waters recording this species did not have more than 20 and generally many fewer.

A few birds lingered late into May and June and a duck was on the River Ouse in York from 21st June to 15th August (BGP. HJW). Four were at Mickletown Ings on 3rd August and birds were at Fairburn Ings and Wintersett Res. later in the month.

An apparent coastal influx in mid-November: 60 were present off the Scarborough coast, Burniston to Scalby from 10th to 15th and 12 were in Filey Bay on 13th when two others flew north. Note also Hornsea Mere's increase by 27th. Spurn had several during late October/November. 35 came in at Burniston on 15th and settled in the sea and others were evident at several places on same day.

Addition to 1976 Report: Add to the list of species which also occurred during the year.

### Long-tailed Duck Clangula hyemalis

A duck stayed on Hornsea Mere from 1st January to 18th April (RGH). Single birds at Filey on several dates to late February with two on 3rd January and 12th February and single birds on three dates at year-end. Ten flew north off Flamborough on 18th November (PAL. IS) with two there on 27th November (DIMW). Spurn had singles on 2nd and 3rd October with three flying south on 12th, two on 22nd and one on 6th November. Four flew north at Scarborough on 2nd January (BEP) and one drake on 11th February (MF). A duck at Scarborough on 5th April and a drake on 10th April (MF. VAL).

### Velvet Scoter Melanitta fusca

Numbers at Spurn were exceptional during January to April. Most were flying south; 18 on 6th January, 20 on 29th and 32 on 30th. Four on 12th February, on six days in March with a maximum of 27 and almost daily in April with a maximum of 48. Between 3rd and 8th April there were up to 50 on the Humber. There were several records of one to four birds from 8th July to end of November.

Birds were also recorded at Filey, Flamborough, Fraisthorpe, Hornsea, and the Scarborough area from January to April and August to November, five being the maximum. Cornelian Bay had 22 on 1st January and smaller numbers to month-end (RHA).

One at Tophill Low Res. on 27th April (PJI) and 10th May (DJB).

### Common Scoter Melanitta nigra

27 drakes were at Chelker Res. near Skipton on 13th April (FAW) and 26 drakes were on Scargill Res. in Nidderdale on 26th June (JO).

On 26th July, Swillington Ings had a flock of 49 including only one duck (PS. DP. JA), and on 30th July, Blackmoorfoot Res. had an exceptional party of 75 drakes.

There were other records of mainly single birds at several waters in V.C.s 63 and 64, mainly from July to October.

A coastal movement on 10th July with 71 at Scarborough, 150 at Burniston, 137 at Filey, 170 at Flamborough and 300 at Spurn. The 17th September sea-watching 'jackpot' produced 303 flying north at Burniston (MF), 342 at Filey, 145 at Flamborough (DIMW), 494 at Hornsea (JEA) and 306 at Spurn. Smaller numbers were seen at Ravenscar and Scalby Mills (RHA). Other large flocks were 240 off Withernsea on 25th February (SML) and 300 at Fraisthorpe on 19th March (BSP).

### Eider Somateria mollissima

Recorded along the coast from Spurn northwards to Scarborough in every month except July. Only small numbers were involved not exceeding ten birds, except the following: 26 at Spurn on 15th May and up to 47 almost daily in late October were maxima there otherwise low single figures. 32 (including 21 drakes) flew north off Flamborough on 27th November (DIMW). Two drakes were on Gouthwaite Res. on 7th May (AFGW).

Ruddy Duck Oxyura jamaicensis

A drake at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 15th May (GMY, JED) and two duck/immatures at Wintersett Res. on 10th September (PS, GJS). One at Worsborough Res. on 20th November and from 30th November to 7th December (GL, AG, MEB).

Red-breasted Merganser Mergus serrator

Recorded along the coast in every month, numbers not exceeding ten except for 15 at Flamborough on 18th November (PAL. IS). Five flew west at Blacktoft Sands on 3rd October (AG).

Inland records were few: singles at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 23rd April and 28th June, pair at Wintersett Res. on 5th May, pair in the River Ribble near Settle from 3rd to 13th May, the drake remaining until the 16th, three at Staveley Lagoon on 22nd January (RE. PTT) and two on 24th September (GTF), a drake at Nosterfield G.P. on 23rd February (CS), a drake on the river at Stamford Bridge on 5th February (TMC), a duck at Swillington on 22nd October, one at Eccup Res. on 13th November and a drake at Fairburn Ings on 8th May. A pair at Stocks Res. on 28th May (FAW) but no breeding results reported.

Goosander Mergus merganser

Hornsea Mere had few birds with maxima of 15 on 6th February and 13 on 22nd December. Eccup Res. had monthly maxima of 92 in January, 64 in February, 61 in March, 39 in April, singles in May and September, two in October, 41 in November and 49 in December.

Fairburn Ings had relatively large numbers with 11 on 1st January increasing to 26 by 11th and 41 by 26th and into February declining to 19 by month-end. Up to 16 during March with 23 on 2nd April. At the year-end, up to 42 from end of November. The Leighton/Roundhill Reservoirs continue to be popular for this species and birds occurred in

every month with 79 on 22nd January and 92 on 13th February as maxima (PJC).

Maximum counts at other waters in V.C. 64 were 13 at Farnham G.P. on 15th January (RE. PTT), 16 on the River Ure near Ripon on 16th January and again on 16th April (CS), 18 at Gouthwaite Res. and 15 at Hay-a-Park G.P. on 11th December (PJC. RE). 40 at Chelker Res. on 2nd January (KM. FAW), 30 on 29th January and fewer to 23rd April (FAW), 38 on Lower Barden Res. on 22nd January and 20 on 5th March (FAW. DMP). There were several other records of smaller numbers at reservoirs and river courses. In contrast, V.C. 63 had records from only 11 waters, all of single birds except four at Langsett Res. on 13th February and ten at Wintersett Res. on 7th December and six on 17th.

One pair bred on the River Tees near Wycliffe rearing seven young. Present on the River Ure but breeding success not reported. A duck with nine young on the River Wharfe near Bolton Abbey on 3rd June (MH). A duck was flushed from the bank of the River Dove in

Farndale on 28th June, joined a drake in flight and circled round together (NAB).

Smew Mergus albellus

All redheads except where stated.

V.C. 61: one at Sandsfield G.P. (Brandesburton) on 26th December (DB); V.C. 63: two at Southfield Res. from 1st to 10th January (CW). One at Wintersett Res. from 1st to 9th January and from 29th January to 4th March (GJS. PS. JSA. et al), one from 17th to 20th March and from 10th to 28th December (GJS. PS. JED). One at Catcliffe Flash on 8th February (DMH). V.C. 64: one on Lindley Res. on 17th December (KM), one at Hay-a-Park G.P. from 8th December to year-end (RE. PTT. et al), one at Fairburn Ings during January, on 6th February and from 9th March to 13th April. Another (or the same) on 20th November and on several dates to year-end with a drake on 11th and 13th December.

Correction to 1976 Report: V.C. 63: 31st February (lines 3 and 4) should read 31st

December.



### Shelduck Tadorna tadorna

The Humber mud at Spurn had birds throughout the year with maxima in spring of 84 on 4th March and 99 on 24th August, only 16 during May and eight in June but otherwise ca 50 to 70.

300 were on Cherry Cobb Sands during spring and autumn (JEA) and 214 on 19th June (Spurn's minimum period) (BSP), 400 adults and 70 juveniles on the Upper Humber on 23rd July (DIMW) and the Wildfowl Refuge had ca 500 during mid-September with 585 on 18th (ACh). 175 were in the Upper Humber on 25th October (DIMW) and the Estuary Count on 18th December showed 560 between Paull and Easington (per DBC). Two adults and 17 juveniles at Broomfleet on 31st July (BSP). Easterly movement from Spurn occurred in several months, maxima being in July when 934 passed on 11 days with 283 on 16th and in August when 299 passed on 14 dates. An adult had nine small young there on 27th June. 15 to 20 pairs bred at Blacktoft Sands but high tides in June flooded many nests. 25 young were crèched in July. 30 flew west inland on 25th September and 29 on 8th October (AG).

Inland records came from 20 localities in V.C. 63 in every month, mainly from one to seven birds but occasional large parties: 34 at Whiteholm Res. on 27th July and 18 northwest over Ossett on 9th August. V.C. 64 had birds at 20 localities, the maximum being 13 at Swillington Ings on 20th November. Most birds occurred in autumn. A pair reared two young on York University Lake. The adults were full-winged and wary. Two pairs bred on the Lower Derwent.

### Ruddy Shelduck Tadorna furruginea

One near Crabley Creek level crossing with a Shelduck on 11th April (WFC). A pair on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge from 15th September to 22nd October (absent on some dates) (ACh).

### Egyptian Goose Alopochen aegyptiacus

One at Stanley S.F. from 3rd to 10th April (CEA). One came into Wath Ings on 17th April (JH). Probably the same individual.

A party of four, probably a pair and two immatures, at Fairburn Ings on 12th February moved to Newton Ings the next day. One on the new flash from 11th to 15th April.

Grey-lag Goose Anser anser

V.C. 61: Spurn had a few single birds in the early months; 29 on 26th October, nine on 12th November and six on 22nd December. 62 were on the Upper Humber on 8th January (DIMW). 165 were in East Park, Hull on 15th January (JEA). The Hornsea Mere population peaked at 95 on 20th February and 115 on 18th October with ca 58 to 80 during the remainder of the year. Seven pairs reared 19 goslings. Also bred at Burton Constable and Rise Park. Six were at Wheldrake Ings on 1st May, eight from 6th April to 9th May and ten on 14th May.

V.C. 62: One to four recorded on five dates in January to April and four at Scampston on 10th June and two at Throxenby Mere on 12th (SML. MF). One flew south at Burniston on 25th September and 19 were at Moorthorpe on 25th October (MF). Castle Howard Lake had 27 in January/February, 35 on 6th July, 74 on 19th November and 58 on 17th December as maxima.

V.C. 63: Blacktoft Sands had singles in January and February and eight on 21st October. Recorded singly at six other places with three at Newington on 3rd January.

V.C. 64: 21 were in the Staveley Lagoon area during January to March and presumably the same 21 returned on 17th November (RE, PTT, GTF). Single birds occurred at a few other waters.

V.C. 65: 41 were at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. from January to March and 34 on 23rd December (GDM. et al).

### White-fronted Goose Anser albifrons

V.C. 61: One at Tophill Low Res. on 3rd January, five on Whitton Sands on 30th January and two at Fraisthorpe with two Bean Geese on 19th February (NAB. GED. CDRH). Six were in the Kilnsea/Spurn area from 22nd to 29th January and single adults on 12th February and 28th November. Two on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 9th January and five on 30th (BSP). One at Barmston on 14th March (KR). One was on East Park Lake, Hull, during January. November and December (JEA). Hornsea Mere had one on several January dates with ten on 30th and up to 13 on six dates to 12th February, 16 to 18 from 19th February to 23rd March and one to 24th July which was then joined by a bird considered to be a hybrid White-front/Greylag. These two remained to 7th September. Singles from 5th to 9th October and 31st December (RGH. CHW).

V.C. 62: One came in off the sea at Burniston with ten Pink-feet on 23rd January and 14 were there on 21st December (MF).

V.C. 63: Two at Blacktoft Sands on 2nd January (AG) and two over Wentworth on 15th May (JIM).

V.C. 64: An adult of the Russian race A.a.albifrons was found injured under wires at West Haddlesey and released at Fairburn Ings on 27th February. 60 flew over Knaresborough calling in the half-light on 6th January (PTT) and a large party were calling in the dark over Hampsthwaite on 10th November (PJC). Two were with Canadas near Ripon and Staveley during the early months. One was near Aldfield, Ripon on 20th March (AFGW). Three adults and three immatures of the Greenland race were in the Ribble Valley near Settle from 8th to 15th December (BSh).

### Lesser White-fronted Goose Anser erythropus

One at Hornsea Mere from 24th April to 10th May (RGH. DIMW. et al). An adult joined the Canada Geese at Fairburn Ings on 24th May and stayed until 26th (SCM. et al). No doubt the one which occurred in May 1976 and of suspect origin. One was in Derbyshire in June 1976 and Cheshire from late June 1976 into 1977 and these records doubtless refer to one wandering individual

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

### Bean Goose Anser fabilis

One on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 30th January (BSP). Two at Fraisthorpe on 19th February (NAB. GED. CDRH), one at Scarborough on 20th February (MW. MB. et al) and

one at Hornsea on 21st (CHW).

Six at Hornsea Mere on 26th and 27th February and one on eight dates between 11th and 23rd March and on 31st December (RGH. CHW). One at Scalby on 16th April flew in from the north-east (MF) and five flew into Scaling Dam on 29th December (DJB). One was at Masham G.P. on 9th January and five on 27th February. What was probably the first bird was at Leighton Res. on 6th February (AFGW. CS. et al).

Addition to 1976 Report: 32 at Redmires Res. on 2nd January (ASc).

Pink-footed Goose Anser brachyrhynchus

120 on the Upper Humber (Blacktoft to Weighton Lock) on 3rd January (DIMW) when 400 flew over Blacktoft. 196 on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 9th January (BSP). 12 at Flamborough on 11th September were the first arrivals in the autumn (PAL. IS) with 18 on the Refuge on 17th (BSP). A gradual increase to 540 by 13th October and 600 on 1st December (ACh). 640 at Blacktoft on 28th November (AG). 28 flew south off Hornsea on 11th December (SLJ), 46 flew south-east at Spurn on 22nd December. A few birds occurred at Hornsea Mere during January to May and October to year-end, eight in December being the maximum (RGH).

Inland skeins over 50 in V.C. 63 were 65 north-west over Wintersett Res. on 26th January and 140 south-west over Wath Ings on 4th December. In V.C. 64, 19 flew north at Eccup Res. on 18th September when the Humber had its first influx and 17 flew over Fairburn Ings on same day (same party?).

Several skeins in V.C. 63 reported as 'grey geese' would certainly have been *Pinks*. 350 over Wombwell on 18th January, 250 over Doncaster on 13th February, 108 over Huddersfield on 27th February, 92 on 13th November, 150 over Worsborough on 10th December, 138 on 12th December, 100 on 14th December and 180 on 15th December. All flew west. 300 over Carlton Marsh on 8th November and 160 over Langsett on 27th December.

### Snow Goose Anser caerulescens

The three blue-phase birds which were at Gouthwaite Res. from July 1976 stayed into January and wandered about the area with Canada Geese. Two and three on one date, presumably the same birds, were in the Eccup Res., Harewood, Knotford Nook area from 5th September to year-end. One at Castle Howard on 20th November. There is a small feral breeding population in the Hebrides and this may be the origin of these birds (per A. Gilpin).

### Brent Goose Branta bernicla

The Humber mud at Spurn held birds during January and February and from 15th October to year-end. Maxima in the early months were 22 on 27th January and on 2nd February. At the year-end, after one to two in October and single figures in November, there were 17 adults on 27th November, 20 on 3rd December, 29 on 4th and 64 on 17th. All were adults except one and of the dark-bellied race. Single pale-bellied birds occurred on 7th January and from 15th to 26th October.

15 flew south at Filey on 1st January (JHL) and a pale-bellied bird flew south there on 3rd December (HJW). One flew over Cherry Cobb Sands on 27th February (BSP). One flew south at Flamborough on 25th September (DIMW). Three were on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 22nd October (ACh).

Addition to 1976 Report: One at Blacktoft Sands on 1st February and 26 flying east on 13th February (AG).

### Barnacle Goose Branta leucopsis

It is difficult to separate genuine wild birds from the small, wandering feral population.

Five flew north over Burniston on 25th February (SML). Five flew south at Filey and landed on the brig on 3rd October (JRM); these birds had a ring of truth about them. Five at

Sandsfield G.P. (Brandesburton) on 26th December were probably the same birds. Hornsea Mere had one in January/February, two from 6th to 14th May, three from 15th to 19th May and one on 31st December (RGH, CHW).

Inland birds are always associated with the Canada Goose flocks and move around with them as did three in the Gouthwaite, Leighton Res., Masham G.P., and Farnham G.P. areas during most of the year. Three were at Castle Howard during October to December and a single bird occurred at Harewood, Knotford Nook G.P. and singles in April, June, October, and December. One at Chelker Res. on 28th and 29th October and one near Settle on 24th November, One at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 13th November.

### Canada Goose Branta canadensis

The Canada Goose Study Group continues to monitor the species and studies have taken place throughout the year. The largest gathering was 920 at Givendale, near Ripon on 16th January (JO), one of the favourite feeding areas. 600 were at Nosterfield on 11th September (AFGW. et al). Maxima at Bretton Park were 122 on 23rd January, 158 on 27th June and 121 on 24th December. Fairburn Ings is now attracting more birds with the appearance of new shallow flashes. Up to 59 were present in the early months and 105 moulting birds in July of which 54 were caught and taken away from the area and wing-clipped. 62 were present on 20th August and 40 to 60 to year-end. Ten pairs bred and reared 42 young. One pair reared five goslings on a pond at Sand Hutton, near York.

18 flew south at Flamborough on 5th June (PAL. IS); the first seen there by the observers. Four were there on 12th June (DIMW) and four were on the Humber Refuge on 4th September and two on 2nd November (ACh). Five were on the sea in Scarborough South Bay on 5th April (MF). 12, led by a Greylag Goose flew over the sea at Bempton on 12th June (BN).

One flew south at Spurn on 7th May. Calling heard in the early hours of 8th June and 16 flew north later in the morning at 0435 hours.

Five flew east over Malham Tarn on 29th March and 25 flew north-west over Whelpstone Crag, near Settle, on 16th July.

Mute Swan Cygnus olor

Fairburn Ings had maxima of 103 in August and 105 in September dwindling to 58 by year-end. One colour-ringed bird seen on 7th March was ringed as a juvenile in Stafford-shire in August 1976 and remained throughout the year.

Mickletown Ings had maxima of 52 on 24th September and 62 on 16th October. Hornsea Mere held 126 on 22nd July decreasing to 55 by end of August and 11 by 18th September. 75 were at Newington/Misson on the Nottinghamshire boundary in V.C. 63 on 19th March.

Whooper Swan Cygnus cygnus

V.C. 61: 16 at Tophill Low Res. on 2nd January (PJI. et al) and three on 5th November (IF). 12 on Whitton Sands on 30th January (NAB. GED. et al). One summered at Wheldrake Ings for the second year. Three flew south at Flamborough on 5th November (DIMW) and 27 flew west near Hornsea Mere on the same date (SML). The Mere held one to two on four dates in November/December. Five flew west at Patrington Haven on 26th November (SML). Spurn had one on 22nd October and another on 25th, four on 2nd November and two on 19th and 20th November.

V.C. 62: Three at Mowthorpe on 6th January (MF). Two at Scalby on 22nd January, two on 11th February and one on 15th (MF. et al). Three on Cayton Carrs on 20th March (BN). On 5th November, eight flew south over the sea at Sandsend and were seen later at Burniston (BEP. RHA).

V.C. 63: Several waters had birds from January to March. Maxima were 12 at Mickletown Ings on 26th February and 16 at Marley S.F. on 27th. Up to ten occurred at the other places. One was at Wath Ings from 1st to 8th April. One on 9th September at Southfield Res. was the first, the next being three at Blacktoft on 23rd October whereafter

birds were seen at several localities to year-end, maxima being 20 at Almholme on 9th November and 30 on 20th, 14 at Wath Ings on 26th and 16 at Denaby on 29th and 30th. 14 flew west at Cudworth on 8th November.

V.C. 64: Fairburn Ings held most birds with 36 early in January. 25 at end of January, up to 31 in February and a marked passage from 6th to 20th March until 50 on 10th and 65 on 13th. Ten in last week of March to 9th April. In autumn, a juvenile on 1st November was following by 27 by 5th November, 29 on 15th and 38 on 27th, 39 on 2nd December and up to 23 to year-end. The numbers fluctuated almost daily indicating interchange of waters within the Aire Valley. Elsewhere, maxima were 13 on the River Nidd near Wetherby on 9th January, 11 in November and 18 in December, 16 on Reva Res., near Hawksworth on 27th February. The Ribble Valley, near Settle, attracted 16 on 1st January, 14 on 21st and up to eight in early March. At the year-end up to ten were present in December and 13 were at Malham Tarn on 28th and 29th November. Smaller flocks occurred at several other waters.

V.C. 65: 12 on Semerwater on 11th November, 18 on Smelt-Mills Tarn on 22nd November and 13 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 16th December (GDM).

Bewick's Swan Cygnus bewickii

V.C. 61: The Lower Derwent floods held up to 86 (79 adults) during January (DIMW. et al). 75 on 6th February. 58 on 26th February and more present between Bubwith and Wheldrake on 9th April (HOB). 26 on 28th November (JHC). 14 were in Beacon Lane, Kilnsea on 1st January (GED). 47 (34 adults) at Lambwath on 3rd January (WFC) with eight at Broomfleet on same day (DIMW). 11 on the Humber Refuge on 9th January (BSP). Nine at Broomfleet on 12th February (DIMW) and ten in Beacon Lane on 17th December (SML). Hornsea Mere had three on 6th February and 19th March (DPS) and low single figures on several dates in late November and December (RGH). 12 (11 adults) flew east at Spurn on 5th March.

V.C. 63: One to seven at seven localities in January plus 17 at Ingbirchworth Res. on 1st January and 95 at Newington during the month with 106 there on 12th February. At the year-end there were birds at several waters from 21st October with maxima of 21 flying over

Hatfield Moor on 12th November and 18 at Wath Ings on 11th December.

V.C. 64: Fairburn Ings had only three on 1st November, singles on three other dates and two from 14th November to year-end (SCM. et al). The Ribble Valley near Settle had one to three in January and December and seven at Gallaber on 11th and 21st November. 12 at Eccup Res. on 18th February and again on 25th. Six on Lumley Moor Res. on 6th March and eight at Knotford Nook G.P. on 6th November (DMP). Elsewhere numbers did not exceed five birds.

V.C. 65: Bolton-on-Swale G.P. had seven on 24th November, six on 21st December and seven on 22nd (CMH).

Golden Eagle Aquila chrysaetos

An immature was at Gouthwaite Res. on 3rd April (PJC. AO'N. GP) and again on several dates from 8th to 16th May (JA. PJC. JD. et al).

### Buzzard Buteo buteo

Some birds passed on the coast in autumn with one flying south at Burniston on 16th September (MF), one south over Hornsea Mere on 26th September (WFC) and one south at Spurn on 1st October. A single buzzard sp. flew south over the sea at Filey on 1st October (FJT).

Inland records were scarcer than in 1976 and came mainly from the higher ground of the western part of the county. Five records of singles in V.C. 63 including one near Holmbridge on 21st June. One at Potteric Carr on 26th June was not specifically identified; the date is very interesting.

Gouthwaite Res. had one to two during April and up to three from June to November

(PJC. AFGW). There were no lowland records in Nidderdale in contrast to 1976. One was at Hawsham Bridge, near York, on 18th June (TMC) an interesting date for a lowland Buzzard. One at Swinsty Res. on 21st July (GTF) and one near Leeds on 29th July (AW). Other singles occurred in the spring at Clifton, Knotford Nook and near Settle and in autumn/winter at Settle and Eccup Res. One was in Wensleydale in May. Seven pairs bred in the Sedbergh area (now Cumbria).

Rough-legged Buzzard Buteo lagopus

One was at Leighton Res. on 6th February (NC). One in Bilsdale on 8th April (GWF). One near Pickering on 11th April (MM). One in Tripsdale on 2nd October (LC) and two over Strensall Common on same date (M and JR). A very early, but classic individual was on Barden Moor on 7th August (PMW).

### Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus

The increase continues. Seen more regularly than Kestrel in some areas of V.C. 64. Eight were at Gouthwaite Res. on 3rd April (MFB, PJC, et al).

Coastal passage at Flamborough involved singles on 6th March, 9th April, and on seven dates from 27th August to 20th November with four on 18th September and two on 19th and 23rd September (PAL. IS. DIMW). One at Easington on 16th April (JEM) and at Bempton on five dates in April and four in May (SR). Spurn had several birds (one to three) regularly during April and May and singles on four dates in September/October. Singles at Fairburn (the only records) on 28th August, 27th September and 3rd and 9th October were undoubted migrants.

Goshawk Accipiter gentilis

Reported from ten localities, mainly during the autumn. Singles were at Staveley Lagoon on 3rd January (PTT), Tophill Low Res. on 22nd January (NAB. GED), near Harrogate on



31st March (PVI), Upper Nidderdale during the early months, Wath Ings on 24th April (JW. DJS), one near Scarborough on 16th April (IH), flying over York on 8th September (DJB), near Harrogate on 17th September (AO'N), Gisburn Forest on 18th September (SRa). A pair was present during most of the year at one locality.

### Red Kite Milvus milvus

One at Crosshills, Keighley on 10th July (CSt).

Honey Buzzard Pernis apivorus

One flew south along the cliff top at Hornsea on 1st October (JEA).

A bird summered at one locality from April to August and a second individual was seen on 3rd September.

One was at Gouthwaite Res. on 10th September (PVI).

Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus

V.C. 61: Six birds passed at Spurn, all singles as follows: 20th and 29th April. 7th May, 26th and 29th August and 3rd September. All flew south except the latter. One was along the Humber shore at Easington on 22nd May (SML) and a cream-crown was near Kilnsea on 26th August (MS. ML). Hornsea Mere had an immature male on 8th April and two cream-crowns on 30th. In May there were single cream-crowns on 1st, 4th, 7th, 9th to 11th, 15th and 16th, and 31st with two present on 6th and a male on 3rd (RGH. KR). One on 8th June. A female at Tophill Low Res. on 29th and 30th April (PM. GED. et al) and a male on 21st August (PM). A cream-crown at Welwick on 31st August (NAB).

V.C. 62: A female on Danby Beacon on 28th April (CB. EW) and one coming in over the

sea at Burniston on 17th May (MF).

V.C. 63: Singles at Langsett Res. on 10th May (RW), Brompton Moor on 15th May, Wath Ings on 17th June (JH) and Thorne Moors on 22nd May, 24th September and 24th December. Blacktoft Sands had a breeding pair which reared two young. The male arrived on 22nd April and the female on 26th. The female and young had left the area by 22nd September but the male stayed till 1st October. At least six passage birds occurred between 13th May and 14th September. An adult female was present from 23rd November to yearend (AG).

V.C. 64: A male at Staveley Lagoon on 1st May and a second bird was seen on 21st May

(RE, PTT). One at Farnham G.P. on 8th May (RE, JRM, AFGW).

Hen Harrier Circus cyaneus

As in 1976, widely distributed mainly during the non-breeding season and in encouraging numbers, some areas having up to four birds and five in one area in the south-west at the year-end. V.C. 65 reported 15 sightings from February to May and July to November (none reported in 1976).

One breeding record reached me. Six eggs were laid and some hatched but all vanished in

early June in spite of a voluntary watch in the area.

Montagu's Harrier Circus pygargus

A female and an immature male at Blacktoft Sands on 10th May (AG). A female flew north at Flamborough on 19th May (PAL. IS). A female was on Barden Moor on 22nd May (FAW. PMW).



Osprey Pandion haliaetus

V.C. 61: One south along Bempton cliff top on 9th May (SR) and one at Tophill Low Res. on same day (PJI). One at Hornsea Mere on 3rd June (IGH).

V.C. 62: One in Sleddale on 27th April (AI).

V.C. 63: Singles at Wath Ings on 15th May (JH), Blacktoft Sands on 23rd May (AG) and Wintersett Res. on 28th September (GJS). One at Langsett Res. on 20th November (IF).

V.C. 64: An exceptional spring: one at Staveley Lagoon on 12th and 16th April (PTT). Fairburn Ings on 14th May and 1st June (GH. JM. TG. et al), near Settle on 8th May (BSh), near Ilkley on 10th April (CF), Washburn Valley on 21st May (LGD), Knotford Nook on 25th May (DAR), and Castle Howard on 30th May (JW). One at Leighton Res. on 16th and 17th July (PJC. AO'N).

V.C. 65: One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 1st June (GDM).

Addition to 1976 Report: One at Wath Ings (V.C. 63) on 18th September (NA).

### Hobby Falco subbuteo

An interesting series of records and the increase continues.

V.C. 61: One at Wheldrake Ings on 30th April (RWB). Seen singly at Hornsea Mere on 29th May and 4th, 11th and 19th June (RGH. IGH. et al). Singles at Bempton on 11th June (SR) and 14th August (SCM), Flamborough on 29th August (PAL. IS), Hornsea on 25th September (AMA) and Flamborough on 30th September (PAL. IS). Singles flew south at Spurn on 7th and 9th May.

V.C. 63: Singles seen as follows: Rivelin Valley on 29th May, Wath Ings on 21st May and 26th September, Potteric Carr on 15th June, Hatfield Moor on 29th June, Carlton Marsh on 11th July, Newington on 16th, 20th and 27th July and 16th August, Blacktoft Sands on 13th

August and 23rd to 26th August (immature), and South Elmsall on 29th September.

V.C. 64: Singles at Fairburn Ings on 8th and 9th June (CW. SML. RK. RS), 28th August (RKM, PB), 17th and 22nd September (SH, CW, et al), Knaresborough Ringing Station on 13th August (RE. PTT), Swillington Ings on 14th August (immature), 27th August (probably same immature), and 4th September (ad. male) (JW), the latter catching a Sand Martin, Gouthwaite Res. on 29th August (PJC. AO'N).

Addition to 1974 Report: One over Fulford, York on 4th August (JHL).

Addition to 1976 Report: One at Gorple on 1st September (KS).

Peregrine Falco peregrinus

V.C. 61: One at Hornsea Mere on 5th January (IGH). One at Flamborough on 9th April

V.C. 62: Two near Goathland on 3rd September (BSP. SP). One at Burniston on 23rd October (MF).

V.C. 63: Singles at Blacktoft Sands on 5th March (AG), Wintersett Res. on 1st May (BSA. et al), Walshaw on 6th August (DIC) and Blackmoorfoot Res. on 3rd December (MRD). It is possible that the latter was a falconer's bird.

V.C. 64: Recorded in Upper Nidderdale on 20th March, two dates in June, one in August, one in October and two in November (PJC. FAW. et al). One at Malham Tarn on 2nd July, Leighton Res. on 6th July, singles near Settle on five dates from 12th October to 15th December (BSh), one at Swillington on 20th November (JW) and two near Austwick on 6th December. Two pairs bred successfully and one other in the north-west, now in Cumbria.

### Merlin Falco columbarius

In V.C. 63, five pairs reared young in western moorland areas, one pair failed and another possibly bred. Two pairs bred successfully in Upper Nidderdale and two pairs in Wharfedale. Other pairs were at sites during the summer but no proof of breeding.

Outside the breeding season, occurred regularly and from all areas, especially in the south-east with up to six on Thorne Moors during December and frequent sightings on Hatfield Moor and Blacktoft. Some coastal passage evident at Spurn in September/October.

### Kestrel Falco tinnunculus

Continues to succeed and the fact that three vice-county recorders relegated it to the also occurred category indicates its stability.

Passage at Flamborough was noted on 23rd September (ten), 1st October (12), 9th October (14), and 15th October (ten) (PAL. IS). Spurn had up to five on several April dates and up to six daily in July, August and September and up to nine in October.

Black Grouse Lyrurus tetrix

Two males in Upper Nidderdale on several dates in April. May and August (FAW. MGHG). A female with six young seen on 19th June (MGHG) and a female and young was also seen over the watershed near Leighton Res. (per AFGW). The population in Upper Wharfedale was not monitored. Counts at three sites near Settle were three males and three females on 29th January. 19 females and 1 male on 12th February, eight females on 28th February (BSh). A few other records of small numbers and odd birds from the upper dales of the Wharfe, Nidd and Ribble.

Red-legged Partridge Alectoris rufa

Still numerous in the south with 71 pairs located in the Doncaster area including 50 pairs on Hatfield Moor where five coveys totalled 51 birds on 30th October. Coveys of 20, 22 and 20 reported from Wath, Mickletown and Wintersett respectively during October to December.

Elsewhere in the county, birds were more numerous than usual and several areas reported good coveys with several of up to 30 birds south of York and up to 21 near Tadcaster, Birkin and Byram. Two were in Farndale on 25th December (DJB), an unusual locality.

Partridge Perdix perdix

As in 1976, there were some large coveys, mainly in the south: 21 on the saltings at Cherry Cobb sands on 16th January (BSP) and 41 at Blacktoft Sands (AG). Wath Ings had 70 on 17th January and 50 on 26th November. Thorne Moors had 70 on 29th October and coveys of ca 40 were seen at Staveley Lagoon, Worsborough Valley and Fairburn Ings in January and near Wintersett in November.

### Quail Coturnix coturnix

One at Spurn on 17th May, only the third record for the peninsula. One was found exhausted at Dinnington in V.C. 63 on 18th April and released at Denaby Ings. One calling at Newington on 22nd May, one seen at Ingbirchworth on 28th May (JMD), one calling at Hootan Pagnall on 10th July and two seen near Blackmoorfoot village on 8th August (JED). One was seen at Scar House Res. in Nidderdale on 6th August (FAW).

Crane Grus grus

One at Fairburn Ings on 17th March (CW). A sub-adult was at Wheldrake Ings from 24th April to 9th May (TDC. JHL. GS). Two flew south offshore at Hornsea on 1st October (JEA. ST). One was at Haxby from 8th to 17th October (C and MJAT).

All accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Correction to 1976 Report: The record at Almholme and the one at Owston Wood and Bentley Tilts refer to the same bird, the localities being in close proximity and reported by two sets of observers.

Demoiselle Crane Anthropoides virgo

One in the Hundale Wyke/Staintondale area, north of Scarborough on 10th and 11th May (JW).

Water Rail Rallus aquaticus

Fairburn Ings had 20 to 25 in the early and late months (SCM), Blacktoft Sands had 28 on 18th January and 30 on 28th November as maxima. Breeding was not actually confirmed this year but calls and song recorded from four different areas. Judging from calls, three pairs were thought to have young in July (AG). Bred at Wheldrake Ings and Pocklington Canal and an adult with three chicks seen at Fairburn Ings on 30th July (SCM). Two were on Thorne Moors on 25th June and small numbers at Hornsea Mere during the summer.

Elsewhere, widely scattered in the east and south of the county in the autumn and winter with more records than usual indicating a large immigration.

Spotted Crake Porzana porzana

One present at a site south of York from 21st May to 16th June (JHL. BD. JG). One was at Scout Dyke Res. on 14th August (RJW) and one at Swillington Ings on 28th August (JW).

### Corncrake Crex crex

One calling near Battersby Station in V.C. 62 on 9th July (AC). One at Flamborough on 21st August (PAL. IS). A juvenile found dead on the road at Leathley Bridge near Otley on 9th October (DMP). One calling from barley near Richmond on 17th and 28th June and 3rd and 21st July.

### Coot Fulica atra

The large concentrations during the autumn and winter months were normal at the favoured waters (see recent previous reports). Noted to be breeding or attempting to do so more frequently at small waters in the west and south-west of V.C. 63. An all-white bird was present at a small pond at Kilnwick Percy in V.C. 61 for the third successive year.

Breeding numbers at Hornsea Mere are well down on the estimated 200 pairs in the early

1970s (RGH).

Oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus

A pair hatched young in a kale field near Melbourne on the Lower Derwent and birds were seen on arable land in the area during the breeding season, a new locality (per HOB).

Passage inland in spring was generally light except for 30 at Masham G.P. on 5th March (AFGW).

Coastal movements and concentrations in the Humber were normal with large flocks on the Humber at Spurn of up to 2,060 during January to March and 1,800 during October to December as maxima. Southerly passage occurred on many dates in the autumn.

310 were in Cornelian Bay, Scarborough on 29th December (SML).

Lapwing Vanellus vanellus

Large flocks during the winter months in V.C.s 63 and 64 were common and 1.000 to 2,000 birds were recorded at 13 places in V.C. 63, mostly during the autumn/winter period and at 11 places in V.C. 64 with a further six flocks in the York area. Larger concentrations were 3,000 at Southfield Res. on 18th February and 2,600 near Tophill Low Res. on 22nd February.

Spurn had its main southward passage on 28 days in October when a total of 1,882 passed, 1,036 being on 31st. Smaller numbers passed on several days during June to November and some birds flew north-west, the maxima being 175 on 26th October. Birds were also seen flying south at Burniston on 22nd, 23rd and 31st October with 132, 170 and 130 respectively (MF).

Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula

Generally distributed along the coast and the Humber shore in the autumn and winter months in small numbers, some maxima being 21 at Spurn on 30th January, 95 on 24th August, 100 on 6th September, and 90 on 1st October; 23 at Filey on 25th January, 35 at Bridlington on 25th February and 80 roosting on a rubbish tip at Welton Water on 21st August was a big number for the area (AMA). Inland passage followed the normal pattern and involved small numbers at many waters. Maxima were ten at Wath Ings on 26th May and 16 at Fairburn Ings on 27th April. Numbers at most places were in the low single figures.

More birds nested inland with at least three pairs at Gouthwaite Res., three at Masham G.P., one at Staveley Lagoon, one at Nosterfield G.P., one at Mickletown Ings, and one at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. Three birds summered for the first time at Fairburn Ings. The Grimwith Res. site was not reported and extensive workings there may have disturbed them.

### Little Ringed Plover Charadrius dubius

Breeding reported as follows:

V.C. 61: One pair with four chicks near Tophill Low Res. and one pair on bare ground near Wold Newton were displaying and showing concern in May and June.

V.C. 62: One pair hatched successfully at Seamer G.P. One pair attempted near York.

V.C. 63: Two pairs at Mickletown Ings had four young and 16 pairs attempted at eight sites in the Doncaster area.

V.C. 64: Two pairs bred successfully at Gouthwaite Res. and four pairs were present in June. One pair at Staveley Lagoon was predated. Three pairs at Masham G.P. Six pairs bred at Fairburn Ings (five on slag and one on new subsidence).

V.C. 65: One pair reared two young at Bolton-on-Swale G.P.

The first to appear in spring were singles at Fairburn Ings and Staveley Lagoon on 20th March, although the majority did not arrive until the first week of April. In the autumn most birds had left by the end of September but a few lingered on with the last at Wath on 22nd October. 24 at Fairburn Ings on 16th July was the largest assembly.

### Grey Plover Pluvialis squatarola

Fewer inland records than last year but still more than usual with birds at eight waters in V.C. 63 and seven in V.C. 64, maxima being three at Fairburn Ings during 16th to 29th September. Most birds occurred during July to October with a few in April and May and on two dates in January and at Broomhill Flash on 22nd and 23rd June.

Coastal and estuary numbers were average with small numbers along the sea coast but good flocks at Spurn and up the Humber. Spurn's maxima were 80 in February and 50 in October. 40 were at Cherry Cobb Sands on 12th March and 50 during early May (JEA. GED. BSP). 50 were at Easington Lagoons on 16th October (HTJ) and 56 were in the Upper Humber on 25th October, including a flock of 44 flying west at dusk (DIMW).

### Golden Plover Pluvialis apricaria

Large flocks in the upper Humber area in the autumn included 2,200 near Blacktoft/ Weighton Lock (DIMW), 3,000 on Whitton Sands on 1st November (AG) and 4,000 there on 10th November (ACh).

Inland flocks were numerous and large, most being in the York/Derwent area and the foothills of V.C.s 63 and 64. V.C. 63 had flocks of up to 850 at five places with 1,000 at Broadstones Res. on 31st July as maximum. V.C. 64 had maxima of 1,000 at four places. Rigton (April), Staveley Lagoon (April), Hay-a-Park G.P. (October) and near Harrogate (November). 2,100 were at Nun Appleton, near York from 13th November to month-end. 1,500 at Acaster Malbis, near York, in October and 1,000 on the Lower Derwent during the winter months. As usual, many birds in April were showing characters of the Northern form.

### Lesser Golden Plover Pluvialis dominica

One was with Golden Plovers at Faxfleet on 30th October (DIMW). Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

### **Dotterel** Eudromius morinellas

One was on Ingleborough on 23rd August (AT). One flew south at Spurn on 9th September. A juvenile at Fairburn Ings on 10th September (GG). One was on Great Shunner Fell on 15th September (IH. LG). A juvenile was at Chelker Res. with Golden Plovers on 28th September (FAW, PMW).

### Turnstone Arenaria interpres

A marked inland movement during May with singles at Nosterfield G.P. and Staveley Lagoon on 3rd, Fairburn Ings on 7th, 19th and 28th/29th, two at Thrybergh Tip on 10th.

singles at Masham G.P. and Staveley Lagoon on 19th, Wath Ings on 26th/27th with three on 29th. Five were at Blacktoft Sands on 31st. Return passage in July and August with four at Wath Ings on 17th July and one to two on five dates to 22nd August, singles at Eccup Res. on 18th July, Lower Derwent on 14th August, Chelker Res. on 8th August, and Masham G.P. on 20th August.

210 were at Cornelian Bay on 5th February, 130 on 28th October and 190 on 29th December (SML). Filey had 80 on 15th January, 200 on 6th February and 103 on 23rd February (SML. et al). The Humber at Spurn held large numbers with maxima of ca 80 in January/February, 150 in March, 233 in April, 180 in May, 41 in June, 160 in July, 258 in August, 436 in September, 160 in October, and smaller numbers to year-end.

Snipe Gallinago gallinago

The spring maximum of 182 was at Flamborough Head on 6th March (PAL. IS). Inland concentrations in V.C. 63 included 400 at Wath Ings during floods on 24th and 25th February and 300 were present during late September to mid-November. 250 at Denaby Ings on 9th October and 190 at Potteric Carr on 24th February with 150 on 3rd April. Almholme had 150 on 27th March and 120 were at Southfield Res. on 14th December. V.C. 64 had no comparable numbers and the maxima at Fairburn Ings were 75 in the early months and 56 in December. Gouthwaite Res. had 110 on 3rd August. 100 were at Knostrop in early October. The York area had 190 at Clifton Water Works, 200 on the Lower Derwent and 300 on Fulford Ings but the local report gives no dates. 155 were at Tophill Low Res. on 13th September and 186 on 15th (GED). 148 were on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 22nd October (ACh).

Jack Snipe Lymnocryptes minima

Widely distributed in small numbers during January to March, a few birds staying into April, the last being at Fairburn Ings on 24th and Wintersett Res. on 30th. Maxima during the period were at Wath Ings with eight on 23rd January and 12 on 6th March and 11 at Hutton Magna in V.C. 65 on 25th February.

In the autumn, one at Farnham G.P. on 18th September was the first followed by two at Wath Ings on 24th and seven on 25th. 12 were there on 9th October. Elsewhere, the species was recorded from most suitable areas throughout the well-watched parts of the county, mainly one to two birds with eight at Adwick-le-Street on 17th December and 28 at Carlton Marsh on 19th October as maxima.



### Curlew Numenius arquata

1,400 were along the Humber shore from Spurn to Goole on 16th January and 1,710 on 18th December, of which 1,500 were at Patrington Haven (per DBC). 1,500 at Cherry Cobb Sands on 12th March (NAB, GED).

Birds flew west at Blacktoft Sands from mid-June to end of August with peaks of 310 on 3rd July and 47 on 26th July.

The main return to the moorlands of V.C. 63 and 64 was between 5th and 10th March. Birds wintered at some waters in V.C. 64 with 22 at Chelker Res. during January and February, 63 on 17th December and 42 on 29th. The peak winter counts at Gouthwaite Res. were 19 on 9th January, 23 on 27th February and 18 on 18th December. Birds passed through on their return inland from mid-February and peaked during early March. Eccup Res. had 27 on 21st February, 206 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 27th February, 105 at Chelker Res. on 6th March and smaller flocks at several other waters during the period. 100 at Malham Moss on 9th March, 150 at Cockett Moss on 2nd April and 150 at Austwick Moss on 10th April.

The autumn flock in the Ribble Valley numbered 800 on 15th August and 1st September.

### Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus

The first and early was one flying inland at Blacktoft Sands on 26th March (AG). Birds were recorded at most of the well-watched waters during April and May and from July to mid-September. Spring passage inland was light with six over Wath Ings on 24th April as maximum. Spurn had maxima of ten on 16th April and 19 on 22nd May. Autumn passage involved more birds and 59 flew south at Bempton on 3rd August (SR) and 36 at Flamborough on 6th August (SLJ. PAL. IS). Spurn had birds almost daily from July to mid-September and a few stragglers to the last on 12th October. Maxima were 56 on the Humber mud on 15th July and 61 flying south on 23rd July.

Inland records were widely scattered and mainly during August but only low single figures were involved except for 12 flying west at Eccup Res. on 26th July.

### Black-tailed Godwit Limosa limosa

V.C. 61: Three to four were at Cherry Cobb Sands during the winter months with ten on 16th January (BSP). A few records of single birds along the coastline and the Humber during the spring and early summer. Spurn having four on 16th April. Twelve flew south at Hornsea on 23rd August (WFC) and singles were at Tophill Low Res. from 15th to 17th September (PJI) and Flamborough on 26th August (PAL. IS). Two at Spurn on 30th July, one on 4th August and nine on 31st August.

V.C. 63: Three at Wath Ings on 10th April and one on 28th. One flew east over Thorne Moors on 15th July and one was at Wath Ings on 20th August. Blacktoft Sands had a pair from 17th to 30th April which displayed regularly. 31 flew west inland on 25th April and singles seen on 23rd May, 7th July and 2nd August with four on 20th August.

V.C. 64: One at Fairburn Ings on 21st March, two on 24th and four on 25th (SCM, et al). Four were in the Ribble Valley near Settle on 5th and 6th May (BS). One at Staveley Lagoon on 25th May (PTT) and one at Gouthwaite Res. on 13th August (PJC).

V.C. 65: Five were at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. from 21st to 24th April (GDM). A pair summered in the county but breeding failed and two other pairs were present nearby.

### Bar-tailed Godwit Limosa lapponica

The Estuary Count on 16th January showed a total of 1,000 with 750 on 13th February (per DBC). Cherry Cobb Sands held up to 550 of these during January and February (BSP) and up to 200 during April and early May (JEA). The Estuary Count on 18th December gave a total of 356 (100 at Stone Creek and 250 at Patrington Haven) (per DBC). 100 were at Cherry Cobb Sands during November/December (BSP). 43 flew south off Hornsea on 4th August (IGH) and Spurn had southerly passage on a few dates in each month from July to

October with only 48 birds being involved. 56 came in over the sea at Spurn on 5th July.

Blacktoft Sands had a good autumn passage with 94 flying west between 30th June and 14th August, 51 on 5th July being the maximum.

From one to three occurred at six inland waters in V.C. 63 and four in V.C. 64 between February and September, mainly during May and August.

Addition to 1976 Report: 26 flew west at Blacktoft Sands on 10th July (AG).

### Green Sandpiper Tringa ochropus

Recorded in every month at Knostrop S.F. with maximum of nine during August. Records came from all parts of the county in every month, mainly from the well-watched waters of V.C. 63 and V.C. 64. A light spring passage; Wath Ings attracting most birds with a maximum of eight on 19th March. The autumn passage was relatively heavy and August produced records from many areas. V.C. 63 had one to six birds from 19 localities during the month and V.C. 64 had up to six from 15 localities during the same period. Seven were at Denaby Ings on 23rd August, eight at Staincross S.F. on 19th March and nine on Thorne Moors on 28th. Seven were at Naburn S.F., near York, on 15th November.

Wood Sandpiper Tringa glareola

V.C. 61: One at Cherry Cobb Sands on 3rd August (JEA). Singles at Hornsea Mere between 7th and 23rd August (JEA. RGH. et al). One at Flamborough on 20th August (PAL. IS) and one at Welton Water on 21st August (AMA). Tophill Low Res. had one on 30th May (GED), two on 16th August and one thereafter to 27th August. One at Crockey Hill, near York, on 28th May, Wheldrake Ings on 4th June (GS) and Castle Howard on 18th August (HJW).

V.C. 62: Singles at Seamer G.P. on 22nd May, 8th, 13th and 23rd August (RHA. MM), Cloughton Pond on 20th August and 27th September (MF. RHA), Sandsend on 14th August

(GRB) and at Ravenscar on 20th August (RHA).

V.C. 63: Singles at Blacktoft Sands on 11th May. 28th July, 1st/2nd August and 23rd September; Potteric Carr on 28th July, Almholme on 31st July, Horbury Wyke on 10th August, Royd Moor Res. on 13th August, Mickletown Ings from 8th to 14th August, Thorne Waste on 15th October and two at Denaby Ings from 20th to 23rd August.

V.C. 64: Singles at Fairburn Ings from 30th April to 4th May and on 27th May, and on 1st July, from 11th to 19th July, from 11th to 28th August and from 26th to 28th September with two on 27th August. One at Staveley Lagoon on 8th and 27th May (PTT. et al) and on 6th July and 16th August, Gouthwaite Res. on 23rd May (FS. AFGW) and Harrogate S.F. on 19th August (PTT. JH).

V.C. 65: One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 23rd May (GDM).

### Common Sandpiper Tringa hypoleucos

An isolated early bird was at Wintersett Res. on 28th March, the next record there being two on 16th April on which date birds were also seen at Hornsea Mere. Tophill Low Res. and near Ripon. The next three days saw birds at several places and the first main influx was obviously during the 16th to 19th. Late birds lingered into October with one at Fairburn Ings on 15th, one at Burniston on 16th and one at Wath Ings on 23rd.

56 were at Gouthwaite Res. on 16th July, by far the county's largest number at one water and mid-August saw smaller gatherings at several other waters.

One or two were seen during the winter; one at Bentley Tilts on 29th January and one at Cold Heindley Res. on 11th December. The bird which wintered at Lindley Res. stayed until 13th January and one was there on 10th March. At the year-end, a bird was present up to mid-November and again during the latter half of December (PJC. DMP. et al).

### Spotted Sandpiper Tringa macularia

A bird in breeding dress at Farnham G.P. from 7th to 11th May was the second county record (RE, JRM, PTT, et al).

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

The first Yorkshire specimen was killed on the beach at Whitby on 29th March 1849.

Redshank Tringa totanus

The Estuary Enquiry Counts (Spurn to Goole), showed a total of ca 5,150 on 16th January, 5,000 of which were on the Patrington to Easington stretch. 2,400 were in the same area on 13th February and 1,850 were at Cherry Cobb Sands on 12th March (DBC. NAB. BED). The Estuary Count on 18th December showed 2,395 mainly in the Patrington Haven area.

The inland wintering flock near Settle totalled 20 on 1st January and 50 on 7th February. At the year-end, 12 on 3rd November built up to 40 by 26th December (BSh). Some waters in V.C. 63 held relatively spectacular winter numbers; 28 at Southfield Res. on 13th February and 60 on 14th December, 26 at Almholme on 28th December and eight at Wath Ings in January, 16 on 12th February and up to 12 at the year-end with 21 on 26th December. Smaller numbers wintered in V.C. 64 at Gouthwaite Res. and in the Washburn Valley area and four wintered at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. in V.C. 65.

Spotted Redshank Tringa erythropus

One at Cherry Cobb Sands on 6th January and one at Patrington Haven on 18th December were isolated winter occurrences (JEA. DBC).

One at Tophill Low Res. on 18th April (PJI), two on 24th April (NAB. GED), one at Spurn on 23rd and one near Kilnsea on 25th (DJB). One at Fairburn Ings from 24th to 27th April, one on the Lower Derwent on 30th and one at Broomhill Flash on 5th May. Two at Blacktoft Sands on 1st May and one on 6th with singles at Masham G.P. and Gouthwaite Res. on 9th May. One at Blacktoft Sands on 12th June and two on 14th.

Autumn passage occurred inland from early July to late September with single birds at five localities in V.C. 63 and one to two at five localities in V.C. 64 with three at Swillington Ings on 6th August (JW). One on the Lower Derwent on 17th July.

Singles were at Hornsea Mere on 3rd and 7th July (RGH) and up to four at Cherry Cobb Sands from 28th July to mid-September (JEA). Spurn had singles on 19th June and 16th July then one to two from 20th to 31st August and one from 24th to 28th September.

Greenshank Tringa nebularia

A light spring passage through the county during April to June and the usual widely spread autumn passage covering the whole of the county when from one to five birds occurred at many waters, mainly during the second half of August. Maxima were 12 at Fairburn Ings on 24th July, 11 on 7th August and seven on 6th September and nine at Knostrop on 7th August. Beacon Lane pond, Kilnsea had seven on 4th August, eight on 14th, 13 on 17th, seven on 2nd September and up to eight from 5th to 10th September (SML, DPS). Spurn had birds throughout the autumn period with maxima of 18 on 13th August and 13 on 20th. Six were near Welwich on 24th September (BSP). Some birds were on the move into October and there were singles at Denaby Ings on 5th November and Wath Ings on 5th and 6th November. One was at Fairburn Ings on 12th December and one was near Settle with redshanks from 24th to 26th December (BSh).

### Knot Calidris canutus

The Estuary Counts (Spurn to Goole) showed remarkable numbers: on 16th January 32,000 were counted, the distribution being 20,000 in the Patrington Haven/Easington area and 9,000 on the Easington/Spurn stretch. On 13th February, there were 29,500 distributed as follows: 4,000 Cherry Cobb Sands, 3,600 Stone Creek/Patrington Haven, 1,800 Patrington/Easington and 3,900 Easington/Spurn (per DBC). At the year-end, 5,140 were present on 18th December, 4,400 of which were from Patrington Haven to Spurn (per DBC).

Inland, the species occurred singly at four waters in V.C. 63, in March, May and July/August and at six waters in V.C. 64 in July and August with one at Masham G.P. on 12th November.

### Purple Sandpiper Calidris maritima

The Bridlington/Filey and Scarborough areas held the most birds with 155 at Filey Brigg on 15th January, and 40 on 23rd February (SML), 45 at Flamborough on 6th March and 8th/9th April (PAL. IS), 159 in Scarborough South Bay on 15th January, 170 at Cornelian Bay on 5th February and 110 on 29th December (SML), and 70 at Long Nab, Burniston on 13th February (MF). Filey had one on 22nd June and monthly maxima thereafter of nine in August, 22 in September, 52 in October, 34 on 29th November, and 300 on 17th December.

### Little Stint Calidris minuta

The only spring records were one at Fairburn Ings on 25th May and two at Beacon Lane pond, Kilnsea on 6th June (SML). In autumn, there was a scattering of records from 28th July to late October. One at Horbury Wyke in V.C. 63 on 28th July and one at Fairburn Ings from 30th July to 2nd August.

August produced most records with single birds and occasionally two at Spurn, Cherry Cobb Sands, Hornsea, Flamborough, Seamer G.P., Gouthwaite Res., Chelker Res., and Nosterfield G.P. In September, two were at Easington Lagoons on 2nd and one on 10th, one at Spurn on 17th, one at Staveley Lagoon and one at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 18th, one at Knotford Nook G.P. on 21st and three at Wath Ings from 17th to 28th September. Singles were at Hornsea Mere on 1st October (JEA) and Flamborough on 31st October (DIMW).

Addition to 1976 Report: 22 at Blacktoft Sands on 22nd September (AG).

### Temminck's Stint Calidris temminckii

One at Tophill Low Res. on 15th/16th May (PJI. GED). Another present on 21st May and one at Hornsea Mere on same date (IF. NAB. GED. et al). Two at Tophill Low Res. on 22nd/23rd May (PJI). Two at Staveley Lagoon on 23rd May (RE. JLCG. PTT), one at Fairburn Ings on 15th May (RFD. SCM), four at Mickletown Ings on 24th May (BT) and one at Blacktoft Sands on 25th/26th May (AG).

### Pectoral Sandpiper Calidris melanotos

One at Tophill Low Res. on 23rd and 24th July (SLJ. DS) and one at Potteric Carr on 28th July (JP). One at Fairburn Ings on 18th September (SCM. JM. et al) and one at Tophill Low Res. from 12th to 29th October (JHL. PJI).

### Dunlin Calidris alpina

The numbers along the Humber shore from Spurn to Goole were very high during January with 44,000 counted on 16th and 29,000 on 13th February, over 100% more than in 1976 (per DBC). Autumn figures were 2,000 in the upper reach on 24th October falling to 900 next day (DIMW), 5,000 on Whitton Sands on 9th November (AG), 10,000 at Cherry Cobb Sands on 20th November (BSP) and 19,350 on 18th December, 18,000 of which were between Paull and Spurn (per DBC). 590 were on grass at Flamborough on 3rd January (DIMW), 220 were on flood water at Hollym Carrs on 16th January (SML), 1,000 were on Cayton Carrs, south of Scarborough on 28th January (FAWh), 250 at Hempholme on 13th February (DIMW), 120 at Tophill Low Res. on 24th April (NAB. GED) and 100 at Lissett floods during November (DIMW).

Numbers on the Lower Derwent were high with 52 at Bubwith on 13th February, increasing to 100 by 20th and 265 by 27th. 350 were in the area on 23rd April and ca 200 at the year-end (GS. et al).

Occurred at several inland waters during the passage months and in winter: 44 at Bond Ings, Sherburn on 9th January and 104 on 16th (JM), 50 at Potteric Carr on 16th January, 18 at Southfield Res. on 3rd January and 21 in December, 23 at Wath Ings on 17th April and 27 on 22nd September, 19 at Mickletown Ings on 24th April and 23 on 28th December, 19 were at Masham G.P. on 12th November, 13 at Staveley Lagoon on 27th August, 12 at Gouthwaite Res. on 17th September, 23 at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 17th April and 20 on 18th September. Smaller numbers occurred at many other waters during the same period.

Curlew Sandpiper Calidris ferruginea

V.C. 61: Spurn had one to five birds regularly from 17th July to 24th September with six coming in over the sea on 29th August. One on the upper Humber on 31st July (DIMW). 12 at Cherry Cobb Sands on 3rd August and 16 on 5th August (JEA). One on Beacon Lane Pond, Kilnsea on 17th August (SML). One at Tophill Low Res. from 22nd to 31st August, four on 3rd September and five from 5th to 10th September (NAB. BF. PJI) with three to 13th (GED) and two on 29th October (JHL).

V.C. 62: No records.

V.C. 63: Two at Broomhill Flash from 16th to 18th May, three over Fly Flatts Res. on 20th August and four at Wath Ings on 27th August.

V.C. 64: One at Gouthwaite Res. from 18th to 29th May. One at Nosterfield G.P. from 4th to 16th August.

V.C. 65: One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 18th September (GDM).

### Sanderling Calidris alba

The sands south of Bridlington held 354 on 25th February (SML), 140 on 27th February (IGH) and 250 on 7th March of which seven were wearing rings (PAL, IS) and 200 on 19th March (BSP). Spurn had 350 on 6th April, a record figure for the peninsula and an isolated peak, single and low double figures being usual from January to mid-May when a slight increase occurred with 15 on 11th and up to nine to early June.

A few birds occurred inland, mainly during April, May and early June, a marked passage being recorded during mid-May when birds were seen at eight places. Three at Redmires Res. on 8th May and five at Blacktoft Sands on 18th were the maxima. One was at Eccup Res. on 27th July and three at Whiteholme Res. on 21st August.

### Buff-breasted Sandpiper Tryngites subruficolis

One was at Ringstone Edge Res. from 13th to 16th September (JB, NL, JED, et al). Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

### Ruff Philomachus pugnax

Numbers inland during spring passage were low with no more than seven together (Lower Derwent). The upper Humber attracted more with between 30 and 45 during most of mid-April (7th to 22nd at least) on flooded fields in the Patrington/Winestead area (HMF. SML. et al).

Numbers during autumn were higher with 25 at Tophill Low Res. on 2nd September and 21 on 6th. Ten were on stubble near Stone Creek on 29th October (JED). 12 at Long Nab. Burniston on 22nd August (MF). Inland flocks were widespread and small in V.C.s 63 and 64 with maxima of seven at Wath Ings on 16th August, and up to ten in the Fairburn Ings complex in July. Some birds wintered.

### Avocet Recurvirostra avosetta

One at Stone Creek on 13th February (per DBC). Two at Cherry Cobb Sands on 15th May (BSP). One at Beacon Pond, Kilnsea on 28th May (VAL) later flew down the peninsula at Spurn.

### Grey Phalarope Phalaropus fulicaria

More than in 1976:

V.C. 61: One at Filey Brigg from 6th to 9th January (AMA. DJB. et al). One in the same area from 4th February to 11th April being joined by a second on the latter date. One at Hornsea Mere on 15th April (RGH). One flew north in full summer plumage at Flamborough Head on 4th June (PAL. IS). One at Tophill Low Res. on 22nd and 26th November (PJI. KR).

V.C. 62: One in Cornelian Bay, south of Scarborough on 12th January (RHA), one in Jackson's Bay, Scarborough from 21st to 25th March (JW. MF). Two at Scalby Mills, one off Scarborough East Pier and one at Cornelian Bay on 20th November were considered from plumage to be four different birds (RHA. BP. MSA. et al).

V.C. 65: One at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 26th December (GDM).

### Red-necked Phalarope Phalaropus lobatus

One at Hornsea Mere on 25th September (JEA. DEM).

### Stone Curlew Burhinus oedicnemus

One in fields near Kilnsea on 8th May later flew down the Spurn peninsula (KR. HJW. IF. et al).

### Collared Pratincole Glareola pratincola

One flew east over Blacktoft Sands on 11th June and continued down the estuary (AG. PG. DP). What was no doubt the same bird was at Spurn on 12th June (JC. CDRH. IF). Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

### Great Skua Stercorarius skua

Ten records of one to two birds off the Scarborough/Burniston region from 3rd January to 20th March suggests that a few were probably wintering off-shore (DJB. MF. et al). In the same context, four flew north at Flamborough on 8th January and one on 9th. One was also at Filey on 15th January and 26th February and at Flamborough, singles occurred on 20th March, 8th April, 14th May and 5th, 6th and 11th June (PAL. IS. SML. DIMW). Spurn had only two during the period; one on 5th March and one on 10th April.

Autumn birds were numerous, the first being off Ravenscar on 8th July (RHA). Spurn had one to two on a few other July dates and 13 were off Flamborough on 30th July (PAL. IS). 19 were counted at Flamborough on 6th August and Spurn had one to four on several dates during the month. On 16th September, 57 flew south in three hours off Hornsea and next day, 24 flew north there, 56 were off Flamborough, 16 at Filey and 58 at Spurn, most of which flew north. Small numbers were seen along the coast up to October, late birds being two flying south at Flamborough on 13th, one at Burniston on same day and three at Spurn on 26th. One flew into Swillington Ings on 22nd August and settled on the water for ten minutes (JW).

### Pomarine Skua Stercorarius pomarinus

One off Flamborough on 15th January (DIMW) and singles at Filey on 19th February (SH. AP) and Hornsea on 25th (JEA). Flamborough had two on 16th April, four on 17th, two on 14th May and singles on 15th, 28th and 29th May (PAL. IS). One was at Burniston on 15th (MF). An ailing immature frequented the Flamborough/Bridlington area from 1st May to 11th June (DIMW).

Eight flew north in one hour at Flamborough on 30th June (DIMW), the next being at Spurn on 17th July when two were seen. Spurn had one to three birds on 13 dates thereafter to end of September and ten on 2nd October. More were seen off Flamborough with eight on 30th July and three to six birds on five dates during August including five on 27th when eight were seen at Hornsea (PAL. IS. JEA). Nine flew south at Flamborough in \(^3\)4 hour on 16th September and 11 in one party flew south at Hornsea on same day (DIMW. WFC). Seven at Flamborough on 30th September and five on 1st October (PAL. IS). Watchers in the Scarborough/Burniston area had one to two on several dates from 25th July to 21st September and three on 21st August (RHA. MF).

Singles were seen at Flamborough on 27th October, 25th November and 31st December (DIMW).

Correction to 1976 Report: Line 11: after 29th, add October.

Arctic Skua Stercorarius parasiticus

Birds are being noted more than formerly during the winter months: one at Filey on 1st January (JHL), three on 8th and two on 15th with one at Flamborough on latter date. Two at Filey on 29th January, 4th and 12th February, and one on 26th with one at Hornsea on 25th and at Easington on 26th. Similar sightings off the Scarborough/Burniston coast: one to two on nine dates from 1st January to 26th February indicate a winter presence in the north sea. Spurn had no winter sightings.

11 flew north at Flamborough on 17th April (PAL. IS) and there were several records of singles during May and June then a steady build-up of numbers along the coast during July. 43 at Flamborough on 6th August, 60 on 13th and 72 on 17th with 89 at Filey on same day. 100 at Spurn on 6th August, 140 on 17th and 463 on 27th, 160 on 6th September, 130 on 7th, 86 on 9th and 53 on 17th. Most flew south, 27th August was the best day of the autumn for this species and in addition to the ones at Spurn were 182 at Filey, 769 at Flamborough, 139 at Hornsea. Direction was southerly except at Hornsea where birds flew north, 125 at Flamborough on 10th September and 91 at Hornsea on 16th. Smaller numbers were moving at most watch-points along the coast during the same periods and reduced passage continued into October off Spurn and a few were recorded in November.

Inland birds were frequent: five were blown into the upper Humber at Blacktoft Sands on 18th August, a day of strong northerlies (AG). A pale-phase adult flew west at Knotford Nook G.P. on 29th June (PJC. CY). Three flew west at Fairburn Ings on 9th July (GG) and one flew east there on 3rd August (SCM). One at Wintersett Res. on 20th August (GJS. PS) and one on 16th November (GJS).

Long-tailed Skua Stercorarius longicaudus

One flew north off Flamborough on 24th July (DIMW) and an adult off Filey Brigg on 9th August (PJD. TH. AP). An immature at Flamborough on 13th August (PAL. IS), an adult on 20th August (STH. PAL), an immature on 27th (PAL. IS) and an adult on same day (PG. DP. JP). An immature flew north off Flamborough on 29th August (JEA. RGS), one at Kilnsea on 6th September (DPS), two north at Spurn on 9th September, an adult south at Hornsea on 16th September (WFC) and an immature north at Bridlington on same day (DIMW).

All accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

#### Great Black-backed Gull Larus marinus

During January/February and November/December this species can be found in large numbers at suitable localities; large reservoirs along the Pennine foothills, especially those with nearby rubbish tips being the favoured haunts. 1977 was no exception and flocks of 100 to 600 occurred at six waters in V.C. 63 and seven in V.C. 64 in addition to which was Fairburn Ings with 1,200 on 20th January and 700 on 11th November. The Plain of York, having no suitable waters, is not favoured.

Coastal birds were numerous and the Estuary Count of 16th January gave a total of 1,400 with 950 on 13th February (per DBC). 450 at Flamborough on 18th May and 400 on 28th contrasted with Spurn's May maximum of 30. Spurn's maxima were at the year-end with up to 900 in December. Southerly movement was noted as usual and 575 passed on 1st October, 790 on 12th November and 850 on 20th December. The roost at Hornsea Mere held a maximum of 600 on 13th January (RGH).

For the fourth year in succession, the leucistic bird appeared at Scalby Mills (7th April) (CRC).

Lesser Black-backed Gull Larus fuscus

In contrast to the heavy spring and autumn passage through the western half of the county, V.C. 61 could only produce nine flying north at Withernsea on 22nd April and 16 near Bishop Burton on 30th June. 40 were at a rubbish tip near Keyingham on 14th August

(SML). The Estuary Count for 16th January showed a total of 100, all between North Ferriby and the River Hull, 52 on 13th February and only ten on 18th December (per DBC). Spurn had records in every month but only on four January days (one to two), two days in February and five in December, otherwise single or low double figures with an occasional passage; 28 on 23rd April and 23 on 29th May.

In coastal V.C. 62, recorded only from March to June with seven at Scalby Mills on 22nd

April (MF) as maximum, single birds being usual.

Several birds showing darker backs and considered to belong to the Scandinavian race L.f. fuscus were recorded on occasional dates at Spurn from February to October, single birds being usual but up to three regularly during April and up to five on occasional dates in August and six in September with 11 on 2nd October.

Addition to 1976 Report: Add under Scandinavian race: One at Fairburn Ings on 20th

March and two on 3rd April (SML).

Herring Gull Larus argentatus

3.900 were along the Humber shore from Spurn to Goole on 16th January, 3,400 on 13th February and 332 on 18th December (per DBC). 700 were in the Filey area on 17th December.

Birds claimed as L.a.omissus, showing darker mantles and usually with more flecking on the head were two at Hornsea Mere on 11th January (RGH), four in Scarborough Harbour on 18th January (RHA), one at Withernsea on 1st and 7th November and another flying south there on 5th November (SML). Bird ringers catching Gulls on Scalby Tip during September caught a bird which they ascribed from measurements to the Russian population (per MF). A bird in Scarborough Harbour on 14th December was thought to be a Herring/Glaucous hybrid (SCM).

Inland concentrations at the upland reservoirs in V.C. 63 and 64 showed much the same pattern as usual except that Blackmoorfoot Res. had relatively low maxima of 350 on 8th January and 220 on 31st December (JED. et al). Wintersett Res. had a maximum of 700 on 22nd January and a small rubbish tip near Ripon attracted 600 on 3rd January. 700 were at a tip near Knaresborough on 9th January (RE. AFGW).

## Common Gull Larus canus

The largest assemblies were 2,000 at Hornsea Mere on 13th January and 1,500 on 27th (RGH) and 1,500 on wet meadows at Pool-in-Wharfedale during February. Eccup Res. roost held 2,000 in February (most likely the birds from Pool), and 4,000 during December.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had 700 on 28th March and 750 on 19th November and Southfield

Res. had 800 on 24th December. 600 were at Castle Howard on 27th December.

During the autumn, maximum at Spurn was 1,000 flying south on 23rd July, otherwise numbers passing were relatively low.

Glaucous Gull Larus hyperboreus

Numerous along the coast during January to May and in November/December.

V.C. 61: Spurn had single birds on six dates to 24th April with three on 22nd. An adult at Keyingham tip on 1st January (GED. AWW), two immatures at Hornsea Mere on 13th January (RGH), two adults at Flamborough on 15th January (one flying south and one on the cliff top fields) (NAB. GED), two at Filey on 29th January on which date one was at Hornsea and one flew north at Flamborough. Two at Hornsea Mere on 20th February and a first-year bird at Sewerby and Flamborough on 14th May (PAL. IS. SML). Four flew north at Flamborough on 18th November (PAL. IS) and two first-year birds were at Filey on 3rd December. Single birds occurred during both winter periods on several other dates.

V.C. 62: Up to two first-year birds and a second-year occurred in the Scarborough/ Scalby area during January and February (RHA. MF). A second-year in Scarborough Harbour on 12th April (VAL). An adult was at Ravenscar on 9th July (RHA). Three in Scarborough Harbour on 20th November (two first-year, one second-year) (RHA. BP) and a first-year bird was seen regularly in the area during November/December (RHA. DJB. MF).

V.C. 63: First-year at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 9th January (MLD. PB) and a second-year on 9th April (MLD. PB. SH). Adult at Broomhead Res. on 23rd January (KC) and an immature on 17th December, first-year at Wath Ings on 6th February (JH), an adult at Wintersett Res. on 3rd January and a second-year on 31st December.

V.C. 64: A first-year bird on Eccup Moor on 25th February (CY). An adult at Ardsley Res. on 7th April (JM) and an adult at Knotford Nook G.P. on 26th December (DMP).

Addition to 1976 Report: Add one at Fairburn on 11th/12th April.

## Iceland Gull Larus glaucoides

V.C. 61: Hornsea Mere had a good series of records during January/February: second-year on 9th January, first-year on 13th, 19th and 29th January, third-year on 5th/6th February, and a first-year and an adult on 13th February (RGH. JEA. DEM. RGS). An adult at Withernsea on 18th February (SML), adult at Filey from 2nd to 5th March (PJD. NAB. GED), third-year at Catfoss Tip on 13th March (SML), and a second-year flying north at Flamborough on 8th April (SLJ). Single adults flew south at Spurn on 29th October and 22nd December.

V.C. 62: A sub-adult in Scarborough Harbour on 18th January (RHA. JW), a first-year at Scalby Mills on same date (MF) and a second-year on 22nd (GED. et al). Single first-year birds were at Scarborough on 29th January and 3rd February, Burniston on 16th February and Jackson's Bay on 5th March (RHA. MF. JM) with a second-year in the harbour on 8th April (MF).

Addition to 1976 Report: The second-year bird in the Scarborough area was also seen in

March and on 29th April (ML).

V.C. 63: Single adults were at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 16th February, 28th/29th March and 10th December (PB. MLD). First-year birds at Broomhead Res. from 16th to 18th November (IF) and Wintersett Res. on 12th February and 26th December (PS. GJS). Second year at Potteric Carr on 6th March (LJD. RS) and an adult at Ringstone Edge Res. on 27th November (DIC. DJS).

V.C. 64: The first-year bird at Eccup Res. in late December 1976 was seen again on 2nd January (AM. RH). A first-year bird was at the Fairburn Ings gull roost from 6th to 17th March (SCM. et al). Second year bird in flooded fields at Leathley, near Pool on 20th February (KM. DMP).

Mediterranean Gull Larus melanocephalus

V.C. 61: An adult flew south at Spurn on 5th March and another was seen on 28th May. A second-year bird at Hornsea Mere on 23rd February (RGH) was seen later in the evening flying north up the coast (SML). An adult flew south at Flamborough on 20th March (PAL. DIMW) and single adults were seen there on 9th and 17th April with a first-year on 14th May and an adult on 5th June (PAL. IS) and one flew north on 13th November (DIMW). An adult at Hornsea Mere on 19th November (RGH).

V.C. 62: An adult at Scalby Mills on 2nd January (BP), first-year at Jackson's Bay from 8th to 12th January and on 29th (RHA, GED, MF) and a sub-adult on 9th February (RHA). An adult flew south at Burniston on 30th July (MF) and an adult was at Scalby Mills on 20th August, 18th September and 2nd October (RHA).

V.C. 63: A sub-adult was at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 28th February (PB. MLD).

#### Little Gull Larus minutus

Hornsea Mere attracted most birds with singles on six days in May from the 6th, with two on 14th/15th. Recorded on three days in June and on 16 days in July but no more than two birds on any day. Almost daily during August with a maximum of 20 on 30th and daily during September with maximum of 27 on 18th. Singles seen on 2nd October and 6th

November. Tophill Low Res. had small numbers in June/July with six on 13th and 19th June as maxima (SLJ). Along the coast, birds were seen regularly during the autumn and some big numbers were recorded: 20 flew south at Filey on 16th August (only two adults) (RAI) and 14 flew north at Hornsea next day (only four adults) (WFC). Ten flew south at Hornsea on 10th September (JEA). During the period 16th to 22nd September there were many birds off shore at Hornsea; 39 north on 16th, 21 north on 18th, 87 north in 2½ hours on 21st, and 37 north on 22nd (WFC). It is thought that these figures may have involved the same birds which were circling in the off shore waters. 60 were at Flamborough on 25th September (PAL. IS) indicating a large presence in the general area. Further north in the Scarborough area autumn numbers were small, nine flying north on 29th July being the maximum (MF) but smaller numbers were seen regularly from 25th July to mid-September.

Inland birds were few: One at Fairburn Ings on 23rd April and seven on 5th May, one at Blacktoft Sands on 28th May, singles at Wintersett Res. on 7th July, Horbury Wyke on 30th, Fly Flatts Res. from 16th to 26th August and on 4th September, Swillington Ings on 27th August, Mickletown Ings on 25th September, and at Worsborough Res. on 29th August.

## Black-headed Gull Larus ridibundus

Widespread and common in the non-breeding season with large gatherings at some roosts. The highest number was 20,000 on the Upper Humber on 24th October (DIMW). The autumn influx was apparent at most waters and maxima were 12,000 at Southfield Res. on 14th October, 12,000 at Fairburn Ings in November and 10,000 at the Eccup Res. roost by mid-November. Eccup had 14,000 in early January prior to the freeze-up and 10,000 were at Wintersett Res. on 22nd January.

Blacktoft Sands had maxima of 10,000 on 1st August and 15,000 on 28th.

#### Sabine's Gull Larus sabini

One flew north off Flamborough on 15th January (DIMW). A first-year bird flew south there on 21st May (PAL. IS) and a first-year was at Spurn on 19th June. An adult and a sub-adult were at Flamborough on 7th August (PAL. IS). An immature flew north at Hornsea on 27th August (JEA) and two flew north at Scarborough on 28th (DJB). Two immatures were at Flamborough on 17th September (PAL. IS). Single immatures flew north at Flamborough on 18th September (AMA. IF) and at Hornsea on 21st September (WFC) when one flew north off Spurn. Singles at Flamborough on 15th, 21st and 22nd November and 31st December (DIMW).

#### Kittiwake Rissa tridactyla

A rough count at Bempton Cliffs gave a total of between 60,000 and 65,000 nests (SR). About ten nests were used south of Sewerby, the furthest south and west along this stretch of cliff; this small colony started about 1975 (HOB). Nested on the cliffs north of Filey Brigg but no count was made. A colony of 408 nests on the cliffs north of Long Nab, Burniston (MF).

Coastal occurrences were normal and involved varying numbers. No more than 1.500 were recorded on any one day at Spurn and the Flamborough watchers had 4,850 flying north in 1\(^4\) hours on 8th January (DIMW) and 6,000 flying north in one hour on 27th March (AG). 'Thousands' of gulls in the Scarborough area on 29th January were mainly Kittiwakes (RHA).

Inland records were numerous:

V.C. 63: Seven records of singles in February, March and April at Blackmoorfoot Res., Denaby Ings and Wintersett Res. One at Wath Ings on 16th June and one to two on six dates from 30th July to 12th November at Worsborough Res., Wintersett Res., Langsett Res., Lidgett Green, and Scammonden Dam.

V.C. 64: Fairburn Ings had singles on 15th January, 17th April, 18th/19th May, 25th July, 26th August, and 10th/11th December (SCM. et al). Two adults were at Chelker Res.

on 6th March (FAW). Seven at Gouthwaite Res. on 19th February and eight there on 5th March (PJC). One flew over Great Whernside on 5th March (MGHG) and one was at Staveley Lagoon on same day (PTT). One at Gouthwaite Res. on 23rd April (PJC. AO'N). 12 were at Scar House Res. on 11th June (MGHG. JO. et al) and two sub-adults were at Staveley Lagoon on 21st June (PTT). A juvenile at Stocks Res. on 25th August (WM). Single juveniles at Farnham G.P. on 14th September and Hay-a-Park G.P. on 28th September (CJH. PTT).

## Black Tern Chlidonias niger

Spring passage occurred as follows:

V.C. 61: One to four on six dates at Spurn and Hornsea during May and June with six at Tophill Low Res. on 26th May.

V.C. 62: Four at Wheldrake Ings on 14th/15th May with six on 24th (GS. et al). One near York on 19th June (MB).

V.C. 63: One to four at ten waters during May and June with eight at Potteric Carr on 26th May.

V.C. 64: Fairburn Ings had birds on six dates from 15th May to 9th July with maxima of 35 on 27th May and eight on 22nd June. Movement on 25th/28th May was also seen at Stocks Res., Staveley Lagoon, Gouthwaite Res., Chelker Res., Knotford Nook G.P., Swillington Ings, and Eccup Res., with maximum of five.

In autumn, there were records on more dates but smaller numbers involved except at Blacktoft Sands where there were ten on 21st August and 15 on 26th (AG). Spurn had one to eight birds regularly during August and a few up to 20th September. Hornsea Mere had birds on twelve August dates with maximum of 13 on 21st (RGH). Seven were at Paull on 24th August (JEA). The Mere had six on 2nd/3rd September and one to two from 29th September to 7th October and singles on 27th October and 8th November, the latter having a large gap in its primaries (MJS, RGH).

V.C. 62 had one to two on five dates from 7th August to 2nd October. V.C. 63 had one to four on several dates during July to October and V.C. 64 had single birds at five waters during August and September in addition to which there were one to five at Fairburn Ings from 9th August to 25th September with 11 on 21st August.

#### White-winged Black Tern Chlidonias leucopterus

One in full summer plumage at Tophill Low Res. on 7th June (ASB. PD. VAL). Juvenile at Hornsea Mere on 23rd August (IGH. WFC) and an adult there on 30th (DPS. DGH). An immature at Blacktoft Sands on 25th/26th August (AG).

All accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee.

## Whiskered Tern Chlidonias hybrida

An adult in summer plumage frequented the canal along the Easington to Kilnsea road from 24th to at least 30th April (DJB. GC. SML).

Accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee.

## Common Tern Sterna hirunda

Inland passage occurred mainly during April–June and August–October with some during July. Traditionally, most birds were passed off as *Commics* but of those specified, 17 were at Blacktoft Sands on 27th May and 12 on 28th July, 13 at Wintersett Res. on 19th June and 13 at Wath Ings on 13th July. 23 *Commics* were at Bolton-on-Swale G.P. on 24th April. Wintersett Res. had 13 *Commics* on 29th May. Ulley Res. had 35 *Commics* on 19th June and ten were at Mickletown Ings on 26th May. Of 70 terns at Blacktoft Sands on 2nd September, many were *hirundo*. 20 were at Fairburn Ings on 27th May and 30 on 17th June. Smaller numbers, below ten, and mainly singles, were reported from many waters during the same periods. One was at Dringhouses Pond, York, on 2nd October (DW). Coastal movements did not involve large numbers.

Arctic Tern Sterna paradisaea

Small numbers passed through Fairburn Ings during the spring and were mainly ahead of the Commons. After small numbers from 17th and 23rd April there were 41 on 8th May and seven on 15th with ones and twos up to late June. Five were at Wath Ings on 20th May and four at Blacktoft Sands on 27th May. Eight were at Gouthwaite Res. on 20th May.

Smaller numbers passed at several waters during the autumn.

The only coastal birds to be specified were singles at Hornsea on 15th May, 25 feeding off Withernsea on 5th September, 60 flying south off Hornsea on 8th September and 25 flying north at Withernsea on 13th September (SML).

One was at Flamborough on 18th November (PAL. IS).

Roseate Tern Sterna dougallii

V.C. 61: One at Hornsea on 11th June (DIMW). One flew south at Filey on 9th August (PJD. AP). Two adults flew south at Flamborough on 14th August (PAL. IS). Two at Spurn on 17th July, singles on 23rd and 24th and one on 16th September.

V.C. 62: One at Burniston on 28th July (MF), two there on 9th August (MF), single adults at Scarborough on 13th and 17th August (RHA), and one at Burniston on 10th September (MF).

V.C. 63: Two spent a few hours fishing at Wintersett Res. on 24th May (JSA) and one flew over Wath Ings on 29th May (JH).

Little Tern Sterna albifrons

Almost daily at Spurn from 21st April to end of July but only small numbers involved, mainly low double figures but 19 on 6th June, 18 on 18th and 23 on 19th with up to 17 in mid-July. Low single figures during first half of August and on a few September dates with seven on 25th, the last. Three nests on the Humber shore were washed away by the high tide on 3rd July. Just up the coast at Easington lagoons there were eight on 22nd May and 24 on 4th June when three birds were sitting. On 18th June, ten birds included two incubating (C1 and C2) and there were two flying young on 9th July when four birds were each incubating two eggs and 15 other adults were present (SML).

Occurrences elsewhere along the coast involved only small numbers, not exceeding six and were seen mainly during August and September.

Inland, there was one at Wintersett Res. on 10th May (JSA), two on 15th May, two on 7th July and one on 11th July (PS). One at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 16th July. Singles at Fairburn Ings on 10th and 18th May and 11th July (SCM. et al). One at Worsborough Res. on 3rd September.

#### Sandwich Tern Sterna sandvicencis

The first was one flying south off Withernsea on 30th March (SML), the next being at Scarborough on 2nd April with birds at Flamborough and Spurn on 3rd and 4th respectively. The usual autumn passage occurred involving maxima of 1,100 on the beach at Easington on 25th July. Spurn's highest count was 850 on the Humber during July. 1,880 flew north off Burniston between 1400 hours and 1745 hours on 17th August (MF). 700 were off Flamborough on 19th August and 600 on 10th September (PAL. IS). The last birds were two at Burniston on 19th October.

Several occurred inland:

V.C. 63: One to two at five waters between 17th and 29th April. One at Broomhill Flash on 1st July and up to five up river at Blacktoft Sands on seven dates in May/June and August/September.

V.C. 64: One to four at five waters between 16th April and 29th May. On the latter date four were at Knotford Nook G.P. and calls were heard over Fairburn Ings. Five flew west at Swinsty Res. on 16th June. Two were at Knotford Nook G.P. on 19th August.

## Razorbill Alca torda

A count on the Bempton cliffs in the summer gave a total of 2,921 (SR).

One was found dead just north of Doncaster on 10th November.

Recorded at Spurn in every month except January and December and most regularly during July to September.

### Little Auk Alle alle

One at Filey on 6th February was still there on 12th (IF. et al). Five flew north at Burniston on 20th February (MF). Singles flew north at Barmston on 25th February (SML) and Flamborough on 6th March with four at the latter on 20th March (PAL. IS). One flew north at Filey on 12th March (FAW) and one flew south with Razorbills on 21st May (AP). One was in full summer plumage at Flamborough on 6th June (DIMW). One similarly clad bird flew north at Spurn on 10th July and three flew north there on 19th and 26th November. One at Flamborough on 16th November, five on 18th and 19th and one on 21st (DIMW. PAL. IS). One flew north at Withernsea on 16th November (SML), three north at Kilnsea on 26th November (DJB) and one at Burniston on 4th December (AD).

Guillemot Uria aalge

A decrease of ca 25% on the Bempton Cliffs from ca 12,200 in 1976 to 9,224 (SR).

ca 1.000 auks per hour were passing off Filey early on 22nd January; reported as auk sp. most would be this species. 7,000 flew north at Flamborough on 18th November (PAL. IS).

Black Guillemot Cepphus grylle

One in Filey Bay on 6th January (AMA. PJD). One off Burniston on 17th September, landed on the sea (MF).

#### Puffin Fratercula arctica

The Bempton Cliff total was 4.876, more than double that of 1975 (SR).

The high counts off Flamborough in 1975 were not repeated and the maxima were 2,000 flying north on 30th July (PAL. IS), 100 in one hour on 12th August (AG), and 4,500 flying north on 13th August. ca 50 per hour flew south at Filey on 13th November. Birds were passing off Scarborough on 10th June with 43 north and ten south in two separate hourly periods between 1025 and 1335 (SML). 91 flew north off Burniston during the morning of 10th July with 28 in the late afternoon when many were also on the sea (MF).

#### Stock Dove Columba oenas

Flock sizes of this beautiful pigeon were down on the last two years, the largest being 120 at Hatfield Moor on 21st December and 200 at Warmsworth on 27th December.

Three flocks in the Witherwood. Denby Dale area on 3rd January totalled ca 400 birds and 200 flew north at Wooldale, south of Huddersfield on 2nd January.

Numbers elsewhere did not exceed 80 birds but flocks were widespread throughout V.C.s 61, 63 and 64.

Addition to 1976 Report: Add 60 at Driffield on 18th December.

#### Wood Pigeon Columba palumbus

The Hornsea Mere roost was back at the 1975 level of ca 6,000 during November/December, after a low peak of 2,130 birds in 1976. Spurn had large flocks in spring as emigrants passed; 204 on 19th March, 165 on 20th and 480 on 26th. 800 on 2nd April, 350 on 6th and 440 on 14th. 800 were at Flamborough on 16th April (PAL. IS).

500 flew over Wheatcroft, near Scarborough on 12th November and 500 flew inland from

the north at Burniston on 11th December (MF). 2,000 flew over Mowthorpe on 27th December (MF). 60 flew due east from the Head at Flamborough on 31st December (DIMW).

Over 25,000 birds moved west to north-west over Blackmoorfoot Res. and Hall Dike. Meltham between 1st January and 1st February during the cold period. There were many flocks and roost gatherings of up to 2,000 birds at several localities in V.C.s 63 and 64 including 2,000 at Wath Ings on 1st May. 800 at Copgrove, near Knaresborough on 7th June and 1,000 at Staveley on 24th June were temporarly noteworthy. A *leucistic* bird at Dringhouses. York on 26th February had its mantle, wings, rump and tail pinkish-buff with a darker crown and a discernable white collar. An almost identical bird at Castle Howard on 18th June could have been the same individual (DW).

### Turtle Dove Streptopelia turtur

The first were at North Rigton, near Otley on 23rd April. Potteric Carr on 25th and then at several localities by the 30th. Spurn had large numbers in late May with up to 60 grounded on several dates between 21st May and 4th June with 112 on 26th May. In addition, other birds were moving north during the period with 68 on 22nd May as maximum and up to 20 present during June. On 25th May, 105 flew south, 147 did so on 29th and 144 on 12th June. 33 were at Hornsea on 28th May and 35 were at Flamborough on 12th June.

50 singing birds were on Hatfield Moors during the summer. 43 were on newly cut hay at Broomhill on 5th June, 60 at Thorne on 28th July and 40 at Thorne Moor on 14th August and at Swinefleet Common on 31st August. 30 were at Shiptonthorpe on 28th August. 692 flew west at Blacktoft Sands between 27th April and 7th July with maximum of 45 on 12th June and an easterly passage was evident during August/September.

Birds lingered up to the last week of September at several places, late records being two at Southfield Res. on 4th October, one at Spurn on 10th, one at Listerdale on 24th, one at Flamborough on 28th and one at Selby on 3rd November. The species is bred in captivity and escapes cannot be ruled out. (One escaped in Bradford in October 1979.)

## Collared Dove Streptopelia decaocto

Southerly movement was noted at Spurn in most months and involved daily maxima of ten in April, 18 in May, ten in June, and eight in October, otherwise low single figures were mainly seen. It would be interesting to know if these movements were more than wandering birds from southern Holderness.

The usual flocks occurred mainly in V.C.s 63 and 64 with maximum of 200 at Sprotborough Flash on 31st December. A roost at Swinefleet Common held 155 on 23rd January, 150 on 8th August and 110 on 6th November. 100 were at Copgrove, near Knaresborough in November.

A pale buff bird was at Fairburn Ings during the first half of the year.

### Cuckoo Cuculus canorus

It is a traditional requirement to record the first Cuckoo although the arrival dates vary but little through the years. 15th April saw birds at two localities. Hob Moor, near York and Catcliffe, near Sheffield. One at Wintersett Res. on 16th and singles at Spurn and near Leeds on 17th. Widely reported during the last week of the month.

Birds were seen up to the end of August but September Cuckoos are scarce inland. Singles were at Hartshead and Hatfield Moor on 17th and one found dead at Maltby on 23rd. The last coastal birds were singles at Filey on 11th September and Spurn on 12th. An adult, well described by a reliable observer, was on Royd Moor on 27th October (RJW), an exceptionally late record.

#### Barn Owl Tyto alba

Confirmed breeding records were very scarce; only three pairs in V.C. 63, one pair in V.C. 64 and seven pairs in the York/Selby area.

Sightings of hunting birds were fairly frequent and widespread, V.C. 61 having birds at 17 localities.

## Little Owl Athene noctua

One was seen to take a grass snake at Ledsham on 9th June.

## Tawny Owl Strix aluco

Common and widespread. Pellets found at Cardigan Fields, Leeds containing crabs legs, indicated that the bird had been scavenging on the nearby destructor.

## Long-eared Owl Asio otus

V.C. 61: A pair attempted to breed near Fridaythorpe but one of the birds was shot off the nest by a local farmer. The body was inspected a few days later (DW). Young birds heard calling near Londesborough on 7th July and two young heard on Skipwith Common on 13th July (BSP).

One to three birds roosted at Hornsea Mere during January, one during February and one to two up to 24th March (RGH). Singles at Flamborough on 20th March with five there on 25th March (DIMW. HMF. PAL. et al). Spurn had singles on 28th March and 2nd April. Two were in Dane's Dyke on 17th May (JW). Each autumn, there are records indicating immigration; one at Spurn on 15th October and two on 22nd with two on 26th November. One came in over the sea at Filey on 26th November and there were singles at Hornsea Mere on 29th November and 3rd December.

V.C. 62: Three in hawthorns at Cayton Carrs on 24th January and one at Burniston on 18th December (MF).

V.C. 63: Eight pairs reared 15 young in the upland areas of the west and south-west of the vice-county and ten pairs bred in the lowland areas (Hatfield/Thorne). A pair at Wintersett had their nest destroyed. A roost at Wintersett held 13 on 2nd January and 16 on 16th, nine on 10th December and ten on 31st. Seven were at Potteric Carr on 2nd February. Eight were flushed from a conifer plantation at Allerton Park, near Knaresborough on 5th February.

V.C. 64: One at Gouthwaite Res. on 28th April. Two pairs bred in Wharfedale one of which had fledged young in June (FAW).

### Short-eared Owl Asio flammeus

Birds along the coast in spring and autumn are undoubted migrants and Spurn and Flamborough had good evidence of this in September/October. Spurn had one on 26th September. four on 1st October, seven on 2nd and then singles on most dates to month-end. Some were



seen coming in over the sea. Flamborough had two on 13th November and two coming in over the sea there on 16th (DIMW). Singles at Hornsea on 2nd and 25th October and Lisset on 20th November (RGH. DIMW). Singles came in over the sea at Burniston on 25th September and 30th October (MF) and one at Scarborough on 2nd October (DJB). Ten were along the Humber shore on 16th January (per DBC).

One pair bred at Blacktoft Sands and reared two young. Breeding records in the moorland areas of V.C.s 63 and 64 were very few and sightings in the non-breeding season were

relatively fewer than of late but widespread.

Nightjar Caprimulgus europaeus

V.C. 61: Five pairs bred at Skipwith Common and also bred at Allerthorpe Common (GS. BSP). One at Spurn on 28th/29th May and one on 2nd June.

Addition to 1976 Report: A pair reared one young near Wheldrake (TED. EBB).

V.C. 62: One at Silpho on 31st May and 2nd July. One at Birchall on 2nd July and a pair at Wykeham on 3rd July (MM. RHA. MF). One found dead at Troutsdale on 26th August (P. Dale).

V.C. 63: The first on Thorne Moors was on 19th May. 11 males present during June and a fledged young seen in late July. One pair reared a chick in the Barnsley area. Up to 30 males were present on Hatfield Moor from 5th May to 2nd September. These unprecedented numbers are the result of a systematic study throughout the season (DC. ML. MLy. MS). A male was killed by a car near Doncaster on 6th September (ML).

V.C. 64: One sang from small conifers on Harrogate Golf Course on 5th and 6th June (JRI). Singing heard at two sites on Dallow Moor, upper Nidderdale in June (MGHG) and

one sang at Sawley High Moor on 23rd June (MRS).

Swift Apus apus

One at Hornsea Mere on 27th April (RGH) was followed by singles at Otley and Wath Ings and nine at Fairburn Ings on 28th. Several places had odd birds by 1st May but the first main influx was not until the second week of May. 2.300 flew east north-east over Wath on 21st May and 1.500 next day. The usual spectacular gatherings occurred at the end of May and Hornsea had 2,000 on 29th and 3,000 on 8th June. 5.000 were over Fairburn Ings during 13th to 15th June, a period of dull wet conditions. 2,300 were at Fly Flatts Res. on 9th July. A few other waters recorded up to 1,000 during July and early August and 1.500 were at Swillington Ings on 10th July. At Woodthorpe, near York there were 1,000 on 1st August, 2,000 on 2nd and all had dispersed by 3rd.

Spurn had the usual movements with maxima of 3,200 on 6th July, 2,600 on 17th, 2,500 on 18th and 1,500 on 24th, then smaller numbers during August. Birds passed along the coast into October with records at Spurn up to the 13th, one on 19th, two on 23rd and one on 13th November. One was at Scarborough on 7th November (MF).

The latest inland were singles at Knaresborough R.S. on 2nd October, Worsborough on 5th, Leeds on 8th and Burley-in-Wharfedale on 24th.

Kingfisher Atthis alcedo

One on Filey Brigg on 23rd July eventually flew off north. One was near Kilnsea on 19th August. Only two other records received for V.C. 61, singles at Tophill Low Res. on 23rd October (KR) and at Hornsea Mere on 6th November (SML). There must surely be more.

Elsewhere in the county, widespread reports included few successful breeding records but the number of single sightings indicate that the species is doing well.

Roller Coracias garrulus

One at Ripley on 15th July (RS).

Accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee.

Hoopoe Upupa epops

One on Westerdale Moor in V.C. 62 on 18th May (REm).

Green Woodpecker Picus viridus

V.C. 61: Two records at Hornsea Mere with singles in April and November/December. Bred at Strensall and Skipwith Commons.

V.C. 62: Several records but only one breeding record at Brandsby. One on the rocks at Long Nab, Burniston on 31st July and two on the cliffs at Cloughton on 5th October (MF).

V.C. 63: Relatively well established with fair populations north of Leeds, west of Harrogate, the Washburn Valley, and in the Settle area where Brian Sharrock states that the species is 'as common now as it ever will be'.

V.C. 65: Four records received from the valleys in the south-west of the area.

Great Spotted Woodpecker Dendrocopos major

One flew west along the upper Humber on 19th November (DIMW). The species was widespread in most suitable habitats throughout the county, being most numerous in the western half.

## Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Dendrocopos minor

V.C. 61: No records.

V.C. 62: A pair bred at Ampleforth (PH). A pair in Duncombe Park (DJB) and a pair in

Moorlands Nature Reserve in May with a juvenile seen on 14th August (MT).

V.C. 63: Single pairs bred at Cusworth Park and Sandall Beat, the first proof of nesting in the Doncaster area for over ten years. One pair bred near Elland, two seen excavating in Bretton Park and records received from six other woodland areas. A pair bred at Worsborough but the two young were killed by vandals.

V.C. 64: One was excavating at Burley on 12th May. Drumming and calling at several other localities without proof of successful breeding. Records came from nine localities around York, six in the Harrogate/Knaresborough area, ten in the Leeds area and near Tad-

caster. One was on Austwick Moss on 28th February.

Wryneck Jynx torquilla

In spring, there were few coastal records: singles at Scalby Beck and Scalby Manor on 3rd May (JW) and at Spurn on 28th with an inland record on Strensall Common on 15th May (BGP. JMP). A notable fall along the coast in mid-August: Spurn had one on 15th, two on 16th, seven on 19th, 16 on 20th, 11 on 21st/22nd, three on 23rd and one to two up to 28th. A single bird on 24th September. One at Flamborough on 16th, then six on 18th and ten on 19th (AG. SLJ. PAL. GED). On the 20th, there were seven at Flamborough, three in Beacon Lane, Kilnsea, two at Hornsea plus one found dead and one at Filey. Five were at Flamborough, two at Kilnsea and four at Filey on the 21st with odd birds remaining in these areas up to 31st. Singles were at Commondale on 20th and Burniston on 21st. Two penetrated inland and were seen at Fairburn Ings on 28th August (RM. CW) and Swillington Ings on 10th September (JW).

#### Short-toed Lark Calandrella cinerea

One at Spurn on 28th May showed characters of the reddish western race C.c.brachy-dactyla (SML. JMT. et al).

Accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee.

### Wood Lark Lullula arborea

One flew west and called over Eccup Res. on 7th January (PDy). One at Flamborough on 22nd August (PAL. IS). One at Spurn on 27th September.

## Skylark Alauda arvensis

Numbers were generally down on recent years and flocks were small and scarce. For the first time for many years, none wintered in the Settle area (BSh). 300 near Leeds on 17th January, 200 in the Lower Derwent during mid-January and 210 at Southfield Res. on 29th were the only flocks over 200. 300 flew west over Staveley Lagoon on 3rd January. 1,600 flew south at Barmston in one hour (a.m.) on 29th January (GED. et al). At Spurn, 1,207 passed south on 19th October with smaller numbers on many other autumn dates during September to October.

A south-westerly movement on 9th October was the main event and was witnessed at several places: 263 flew over Swillington Ings, 300 over Roundhay Park, 240 over Wintersett Res., and 1,100 over Wath Ings. A smaller movement took place on 12th October with 100 per hour passing south over Wath Ings and on the 22nd, 300 flew west over Eccup Res., 280 over Swillington Ings and 60 over Knaresborough Ringing Station.

## Shore Lark Eremophilia alpestris

Records in the early part of the year were traditionally scarce: Nine flew west at Filey on 3rd January (RJW) and five were there on 29th. Six at Barmston on 12th March (IF).

One was on the slag heaps at Fairburn Ings on 13th May, an exceptional record (SCM).

Three at Filey on 3rd October were the first of autumn (JRM) with one there on 13th and two on 15th (AP). Spurn had one to two birds on several dates from 7th October to 19th December with four on 28th November. Five were at Flamborough on 25th November and one on 27th (PAL, IS). One at Kilnsea on 17th December (SML). 25 were on the cliff top at Bempton on 21st December (SR). Up to five were at Burniston from 17th to 26th October (MF).

## Swallow Hirundo rustica

One was at Flamborough on 12th March (PAL. IS). The next was at Deanby Ings on 3rd April with one at Gleadless on the 8th and the first influx on the 9th when birds were seen at Bramham Park, Fairburn Ings, York, and near Harrogate. Arrival thereafter was slow and it was not until the second half of the month that birds were widespread and some passage occurred during early May with 700 at Gouthwaite Res. on the 7th and 200–300 at Farnham during May and June. A roost at Fairburn Ings built-up from 800 in late August to 20,000 by 15th September. 700 still present on 7th October and two on 28th. 10,000 were at Sprotborough Flash on 8th September and 2nd October. There were several inland records during late October and a few birds in November: one at Blacktoft Sands on 6th and one at Hall Dike, Meltham on 13th. On the coast, there were two at Hornsea on 6th November, two at Spurn on 10th and one at Filey on 12th.

A white nestling was reported at Cawood Bridge: a white bird was seen at West End, near Otley in June and a white bird flew south at Spurn on 3rd September.

Addition to 1976 Report: One near Doncaster on 22nd November (ML).

#### Red-rumped Swallow Hirundo daurica

A remarkable series of records: One at Hornsea Mere on 30th April (JEA. RGH. RGS). Two flew south at Spurn on 22nd October (JMB. JC. DP. et al), one flew south on 25th October (DA. BB. DF. et al) and one was in the point area on 13th November (DC. RG. KP. et al).

Accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee.



### House Martin Delichon urbica

One at Mickletown Ings on 12th April was the first with two at Ripon on 14th and at many places from the 16th. Numbers were relatively small during the spring passage. In autumn, 850 passed over Sprotborough Flash on 3rd September and 150 flew south over Hatfield in five minutes on 3rd October.

Southerly passage at Spurn peaked at 600 on 27th May with 200 on 1st June and 171 on 12th. In autumn, birds passed on several days during September/October with 200 on four September days and 114 on 1st October as maxima.

A pair was feeding young at Agbrigg in V.C. 63 on 15th October.

The usual late birds occurred with singles over Knaresborough on 10th and 12th, Farnham G.P. on 11th, and one at Withernsea on 14th (HMF).

## Sand Martin Riparia riparia

The first and early was one at Staveley Lagoon on 9th March. The next were coastal birds at Spurn. Withernsea and Flamborough on the 12th. Most inland areas did not have a general arrival until mid-April. Several temporary roosts occurred during early autumn and some larger ones were at Mickletown Ings where there were 15,000 during late August and 10,000 on 30th. Fairburn Ings had a roost from late July building up to 10,000 by 27th August and 15,000 on 8th September. 200 remained at the end of September and into early October, the last bird being seen on 14th October. Southerly passage occurred as usual along the Spurn peninsula in spring and autumn peaking at 150 on 27th May and 237 on 11th September. Late birds were at Hornsea on 26th October and Spurn on 10th November.

#### Golden Oriole Oriolus oriolus

One near Kilnsea Church on 30th May. An immature male at Hornsea Mere on 6th June (RGH). A male was on Strensall Common on 24th June (JB) and a male in Lindley Moor Wood on 5th July (FCD. AMG).

#### Raven Corvus corax

Away from the traditional breeding sites in the north west of the county Ravens are rare. Single birds over Timble Ings and West End in the Washburn Valley on 26th February (GTF) and 3rd/4th April (AET) were unusual. One was flushed from the cliff-roost at Bempton on 21st May (PAL).

## Carrion Crow Corvus corone

The Hornsea Mere roost (see previous reports) held 550 in December. 130 there on 23rd May was an interesting number for the time of year and presumably consisted of failed and/or non-breeders (RGH): young would not be fledged by that date. 45 were at Scalby on 5th February (SML). 120 were on the cliff top at Sewerby on 8th October (SML) and 38 were on the rocks at Long Nab, Burniston on 27th November (MF).

The roost at Ogden Res. woods held the usual numbers with maxima of 300 in January and 350 on 9th December. 480 were at a roost in Haw Park on 7th September. 60 were on Strensall Common on 27th February (JMP. BGP) and there were several other records of relatively large flocks: 38 at Eccup Res. on 23rd January and 50 on 18th September. 30 at Swillington Ings on 29th October and 79 flew east there on 11th December (JW). 34 at Fairburn Ings on 18th July and up to 20 on several winter dates.

Evidence of passage at Spurn with 15 on 19th March and birds recorded on 15 April dates, the daily maximum being 29, 28 on 23rd September and 17 on 26th, 25 on 3rd

October and 41 on 19th with smaller numbers on other dates during the period.

The Hooded Crow C.c.cornix was numerous in spring at Spurn following the 1976 influx and after a few records during the first three months, passage birds were recorded on most April dates with daily maximum of 16. Up to 26 were on Scarborough tip during February (FAW. MDW). Hoodies were numerous along the other coastal areas from January to May and October to year-end with maximum of eight at Catfoss G.P. during January/February (JEA). Flamborough had birds on several dates in June, four flying north on 12th being maximum (PAL. 1S) and one on 20th August (SLJ). At Blacktoft Sands there were six on 2nd January and up to five to the 16th, three to four during February and two up to 10th March (AG).

Inland, birds were seen in the Lower Derwent Valley during January to early April with four on 16th January with one to two on six other dates and one to two occurred at Fairburn Ings, Thorne Moors, Thrybergh Res., Hardcastle Crags, Wath Ings, Flockton and Tadcaster mainly during January/February.

## Jackdaw Corvus monedula

Small numbers passed through Spurn during March to May and during October. The Hornsea Mere corvid roost held 3,500 during December (RGH).

#### Magpie Pica pica

In the Leeds area, there were several records of large parties, the maxima being 38 at Ardsley Res. on 16th March, 26 at Rodley S.F. on 18th March, 30 at Adel Dam in late November and 40 at Farnley Park (Leeds) on 2nd December.

Roosts in V.C. 63 held the usual high numbers; 94 at Ogden on 7th January, 110 at Hall Dike, Meltham on 23rd January and 120 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 20th December.

#### Jay Garrulus glandarius

One near Market Weighton on 16th January was the first seen by DIMW in V.C. 61 where the species is scarce. Three pairs bred at Hornsea Mere. A noticeable influx noted in V.C. 63 during October with 15 at Strines on the 5th, 25 at Wintersett Res. on 23rd and 20 at Bretton Park during the latter part of October and 31 on 6th November. Fairburn Ings had few records during the year but two on 18th October and three on 23rd. One was near Settle on 12th October and one at Austwick Moor on 23rd (note 23rd October). One was at Spurn on 8th October and one came in over the sea at Flamborough on 9th October (PAL. IS).

### Great Tit Parus major

Spurn had up to ten birds on several dates in September and October indicating passage and several inland areas had good numbers during that period: 20 in Strips Wood, near York on 5th September and up to 22 at Black Wood in October and December.

A pair nested in a squirrel's dray at Eccup Res.

### Blue Tit Parus caeruleus

Small numbers at Spurn during the autumn with 22 on 2nd October as maximum. 40 were on Castle Hill. Scarborough and 60 at Cloughton on 3rd October and 20 were at Ravenscar on 5th October (MF). Occurred commonly over much of the county with good nest box breeding season reported. 23 boxes were used successfully at Adel Dam. 100 were seen prior to roosting at Creskeld Hall on 30th January and 80 were in Conyngham Hall grounds. Knaresborough feeding on beech mast on same date.

#### Coal Tit Parus ater

Spurn had three on 10th October and one on 23rd. October saw an apparent increase and movement at some inland areas: Eight were at Gouthwaite Res. on 8th October and 11 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 9th. 20 were in Harewood Park in July and 25 at Eccup Res. during the autumn. Ca 100 were in Black Wood, near York during October to December (TED, ABB).

Marsh Tit Parus palustris

Still very thinly distributed and some local society areas were unable to report more than a handful of records. Recorded from ten woodland areas around York but records were often of single birds as in the Leeds area where only one pair was proved to breed. The only records from V.C. 61 were from Hornsea Mere where singles occurred on five winter dates. 25 in a mixed flock of tits, mainly coal, at Swinsty Res. on 1st July was quite exceptional (SML). The species was resident in Malham Tarn woods (ca three pairs) until ca 1974 with no records since (per BSh).

## Willow Tit Parus montanus

Certainly more numerous and widespread than the last species with several breeding pairs and family parties noted in the summer around York, Skipwith Common and Askham Bog and at four localities in the Leeds/Otley area. 20 were with other tits in Black Wood, near York during October to December (MR).

Spurn had unprecedented numbers with one to two during July, up to three during August, up to five in September and two up to mid-October.

Long-tailed Tit Aegithalos caudatus

Several autumn flocks of ca 30 birds suggested a good breeding season. Some large gatherings were 50 at Newby Hall on 20th November and 50 at Harrogate S.F. (N) on 15th December. ca 200 in flocks of up to 30 were in Black Wood, near York on 28th October (TED. EBB).

Spurn had five flying south at the 'narrows' on 19th March then several records in October with 11 at the point on the 11th as maximum.

Nuthatch Sitta europaea

No records from V.C. 61 and only very few from V.C. 62: singles near Hawnby and at Kirkdale Wood on 4th June and from a few areas just east of York. Bred at two sites in the Bradford area and seen at Sandbeck, Roche Abbey. Bretton Park and at two sites near Rotherham.

More commonly reported from the normal areas in the western part of the county with fifteen breeding pairs in the Leeds/Eccup/Bramham area. Well distributed in the Ilkley/Bolton Abbey area.

Tree Creeper Certhia familiaris

Some evidence of movement in August with singles at Flamborough on 16th/17th, Filey

on 24th and Spurn on 27th. One in a small wood at Flamborough from 25th September to 8th October was very pale above and pure white below and was considered to belong to the nominate northern race (PAL. IS), as was likely the case with five on Filey Brigg on 8th October.

Wren Troglodytes troglodytes

Common Bird Census work at Askham Bog revealed 53 breeding pairs (TDC. BGP. et al).

Dipper Cinclus cinclus

A bird showing characters of the Black-bellied form was on a pond near Bempton from 29th March to 9th April (SR).

## Bearded Tit Panurus biarmicus

V.C. 61: One at Hornsea Mere on 10th January. A pair on the Humber edge near Faxfleet on 16th January. Five at Welton Water on 6th February and six on 13th February. All other records were during October to December: one flew south at Bempton on 19th October when two more at Spurn. One at Flamborough on 26th October and two at Newport brick ponds on 1st November. Six at Spurn on 13th November. At Hornsea Mere there were birds on six October dates with maximum of eight on 29th; fourteen November dates with maximum of 16 on 8th and twenty December dates with maximum of ten on 17th. Tophill Low Res. had eight on 24th October and singles on 29th October and 4th December with 'several' on 6th and 11th December. The Humber Wildfowl Refuge had birds during October to December with maxima of ca 30 on 8th October, ca 67 on 15th and ca 70 on 18th and more were considered to be present from general activity. Four were at Wheldrake Ings on 20th November.

V.C. 63: Blacktoft Sands had 350 during January and 250 in March. 100 to 120 pairs nested, the first broods being evident in late May, second broods in late June and a few third broods in late July. The post-breeding population in September/early October was ca 1,000 to 1,200. Some evidence of eruptive behaviour from 19th September to early November. 500 remained from late November through December (AG). Several birds were seen in the Goole area with 20 on 29th October and 30 on 17th December as maxima. Seven on Thorne Moor on 27th October and three on 27th November. One on Hatfield Moor on 12th November. Potteric Carr had eight on 28th October flying in from the east, 20 on 29th and 29 on 30th, some remaining to 11th December. Wath Ings had six on 23rd October and three were at Carlton Marsh on 25th/26th October.

V.C. 64: A male was netted at Allerton Park, near Knaresborough on 18th December (AGR).

### Mistle Thrush Turdus viscivorus

There were some large autumn flocks: 74 feeding on bilberries on Broomhead Moor on 7th August was the biggest recorded. 43 in Kirklees Park on 22nd September. 60 on Hatfield Moor on 1st October and 40 in King's Wood (V.C. 63) on 13th October. 64 were in Wortley Park, near Leeds on 14th October and a further 16 flew over south. 50 were at Naburn during November/December. 40 were at Commondale (V.C. 62) on 16th August. There were several other flocks of up to 30 birds in V.C.s 63 and 64.

## Fieldfare Turdus pilaris

Emigrating flocks in the early months passed during April and mainly consisted of 200-300 birds. Some larger flocks were 1,000 near Leeds on 22nd March, 1,000 at Staveley Lagoon on 8th April, 1,000 at Nun Appleton and 2,500 at Beningborough Park on 10th April, and 1,100 at Shepley (V.C. 63) on 17th April. Although most birds were away by the

end of April, some birds lingered well into May: singles at Bramhope, near Leeds on 16th and Langsett Res. on 17th were the last inland except for an injured bird at Denaby Ings on 6th June. Coastal areas had late birds with three at Bempton on 27th and 31st May and there were records of a single bird at Spurn on several May dates and on 5th June. One was at Commondale (V.C. 62) on 2nd June.

The first autumn birds were at Flamborough where there were one to two during the month and three on 22nd and at Spurn from the 14th. The next were inland at Allerton Park, near Knaresborough on the 28th with 25 present on 31st (AGR). This flock was unusual in what was a late year, the October influx being small and a second push in late October early November.

Addition to 1976 Report: One pair bred unsuccessfully at a moorland site in the southwest of the county (DH).

Song Thrush Turdus philomelos

Presumed emigrants at Flamborough Head numbered 250 on 16th April (PAL. IS). Spurn had 100 next day falling to 13 by 21st. On 24th September, 30 were in the Filey area and 13 more came in over the sea.

An obvious influx on 7th October when 500 were at Long Nab. Burniston (MF), 85 were along the cliff tops at Atwick/Skipsea (WFC) and 250 were at Spurn. This influx was reflected at some inland areas during October when numbers were larger than usual.

Redwing Turdus iliacus

In the early months, the largest gathering was 4,000 at a roost at Creskeld on 2nd January, numbers falling to 200 by 16th and 25 by 23rd. An obvious exodus during mid-April with several areas having birds only up to the 16th/17th, 600 flew over Pateley Moor. Nidderdale on 13th. Stragglers were few, odd ones occurring up to the 24th. Singles at Malham Tarn on 13th May, Long Nab, Burniston on 15th and Spurn on 12th and 23rd.

The first of autumn was one at Spurn on 30th/31st August, the next at Hornsea on 9th and 18 at Mappleton on 10th. A large influx occurred on 7th October (see Song Thrush) and Spurn had 5,000 birds, 4,700 of which passed straight over westward. Strong easterly winds on the 6th followed by coastal fog were perfect conditions for such an arrival and 13,000 were estimated along the cliff top between Atwick and Skipsea. Many hundreds more at Atwick Gap amd 1,800 near Hornsea, 5,000 were counted at Burniston. As the fog lifted most birds flew westwards. The movement was noted inland during the next few days and on the 8th, 1,000 were at Leighton Res. and on the 9th there were 2,000 near Ripon and 1,600 flew west over Knaresborough Ringing Station.

Ring Ouzel Turdus torquatus

A female at Crosshills (V.C. 63) from 18th to 20th January (SH) was an exceptional record. A more normal arrival, but still early was one at Lofthouse, Nidderdale on 12th March and several places in the upper dale had birds before the month-end, nine being seen at Agill on the 26th. In V.C. 63, the first was at Digley on the 16th and eight on the 18th and 20 by the 28th. Five other moorland areas had birds before the month-end including 27 birds at Hardcastle Crags on 27th. Six were at Sleddale (V.C. 62) on 26th. One at Spurn on 23rd March, three at Scalby and one at Filey on 26th were the first coastal area birds. A few passed through Spurn during April with 11 on 17th as maximum and singles on three dates in May to 15th. Smaller numbers were at Bempton, Flamborough and Hornsea during mid-April with one at the latter on 2nd May.

Autumn passage along the coast was normal with small numbers at the well-watched points, mainly at Spurn from 20th September to late October and one at Flamborough on 15th November (DIMW).

Some passed through lowland areas inland: One near Leeds for a few days from 3rd April

and singles at two other sites near Leeds on 11th and 16th. One near Tadcaster with Fieldfares on 17th April.

Inland sites were clear of birds by 8th October but one was still in Upper Nidderdale on

29th.

### Blackbird Turdus merula

A strange arrival over the sea during late January when small numbers came in at Scar-

borough on 28th and 90 came in at Spurn on 30th.

The thrush influx of 7th October included this species and there were 1,000 at Spurn (600 of which flew straight inland), 1,000 were on the cliff tops at Hornsea and 1,000 at Burniston. Evidence of a smaller second influx in mid-November.

#### Wheatear Oenanthe oenanthe

A very early year, the first being at Heaton, near Bradford on 9th March. One at Malham Tarn on 10th and singles at Knostrop and Roundhill Res. on 13th. Filey and Flamborough had singles on 12th. Many inland areas had birds before the end of March.

Inland passage occurred at Wath Ings in the spring and on 30th April there were 22 in the

morning building up to 56 in the afternoon and 50 on 1st May.

At Flamborough on 17th July, there was a 'fluffy' juvenile but no sign of any adults (DIMW).

Passage along the coast in autumn peaked at 110 on 22nd August at Spurn and 65 were at

Flamborough on same day.

Late birds lingered inland into October, one at Thrybergh Tip on 23rd being the last. Birds passed at Spurn up to 25th October and two were on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 3rd November.

Stonechat Saxicola torquata

V.C. 61: Recorded from many coastal areas and along the Humber shore during January to March and October to December, usually singly but three at Hollyn Carrs on 16th January (SML) and four at Arndale, Filey on 25th February with three there on 26th and five on 27th. Spurn had up to five during the early period and one up to mid-April. A juvenile was near Warren Cottage on 19th June; a very interesting record. At the year-end there were up to eight in October, with 12 on 2nd, up to seven during November and up to four during December. A female at Spurn on 2nd April showed characters of the race S.t.rubicola.

V.C. 62: Recorded at 16 localities in the Scarborough area during January to May and

August to December but no breeding records.

V.C. 63: Widespread reports during the non-breeding season. Maximum was five together. On 2nd October, singles were seen at three new localities (see Spurn maximum). Breeding was proved for six pairs; Scammonden, Rishworth Moor, Dewsbury S.F., near Sheffield, near Halifax (two pairs), and a probably on Thorne Moors. A bird showing characters of one

of the presumed eastern races was at Elland G.P. on 30th January (SH).

V.C. 64: Records received from ca 21 widespread localities during January to early April and ca 15 during September to December. Maximum was seven near York on 22nd September, otherwise single birds were usual. The only breeding records came from the west near Settle where a male had two females on Swarth Moor and was successful, and juveniles were seen near Whelpstone Crag on 2nd October and two adults and three juveniles near Sandy Dyke on 9th October.

On 2nd October (see Spurn maximum and V.C. 63) there were males at Eccup. Barden

and Fairburn.

Correction to 1976 Report: Line 8; Burniston should read Barmston.

### Whinchat Saxicola rubetra

As in 1975, there was an isolated early bird; one on Thorne Moor on 8th April. There were no other records until 26th and the general influx was not until the last few days of the month, 45 were on Thorne Moor on 3rd July.

Coastal passage was noted at Spurn during May when small numbers not exceeding ten, were present on most days. In autumn there were birds on several dates during the period mid-August to mid-October with peak numbers passing during late August (max 58 on 23rd) and early October (max 30 on 1st; 22 on 2nd). Flamborough and Filey had the same movement with 45 on 19th August and 34 on 21st respectively and smaller numbers during the ensuing few days.

Late birds inland were two at Knostrop on 9th October, singles at Blacktoft Sands on 21st, Walshaw on 23rd, and Thorne Moore on 6th November.

## Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus

The first of spring were on 17th April at Bramham Park and Denaby Ings, the next being at West Tanfield on 18th. Breeding records from most areas of V.C. 64 suggest an increase over the past few years but in Malham Tarn woods there were only six pairs where in the B.T.O. Census of 1966/67 there were 19 males in territory. Seven pairs bred in nest boxes in Duncombe Park. 16 pairs bred in the Langsett-Broomhead area.

Small numbers passed along the coast during August and September with maximum of 24 at Spurn in mid-September.

Some birds lingered inland, the last being at Knostrop on 9th October. On the coast, Spurn had one to two up to 19th October and one was at Filey on 26th.

## Black Redstart Phoenicurus ochruros

Light passage along the coast in spring from 19th March to early June and again from late September to November with up to nine at Spurn during mid-October. A few passed through Flamborough during late October and singles were at Filey on 26th October and Withernsea from 30th to 2nd November.

There were more inland records than during the last few years: one at Thorpe Marsh (V.C. 63) on 18th April, a male singing at Fairburn on 26th March (SCM), a female at Eccup Res. on 17th July (SPS. CY), a male at Acomb on 9th October, one at Dalton, near Huddersfield on 5th November and one at Denaby Ings from 11th to 13th November. At least five pairs were in the city area of Sheffield.

#### Nightingale Luscinia megarhynchos

A surprising number of passage birds recorded: one at Hornsea Mere on 1st May (RGH), singles at Bempton on 6th and 29th (SR. GRB) and three at Spurn on 28th May, on which date one was singing in the Valley Gardens, Harrogate (SD). Single males were at Carcroft (V.C. 63) on 1st May and Bentley Tilts on 12th and one sang at Sandall Beat on several dates in May.

Up to four males were on Thorne Moor from 4th May to 12th June and a pair bred at a new site near Barnsley.

One was at Fairburn Ings on 29th August and a nightingale sp. was at Spurn on 21st August.

Addition to 1976 Report. A male sang on Hatfield Moor during the breeding season (ML). One was singing at another site during the summer and one sang at Wadworth Wood on 28th April.

#### Bluethroat Luscinia svecica

Spurn had a female from 23rd to 25th May, another on 26th/27th and a male on 28th. Flamborough had a male on 16th May, another with a female on 22nd, the female staying to

25th. A female at Bempton on 21st May and one at Kilnsea on 28th. All the males were Redspotted L.s.svecica.

### Robin Erithacus rubecula

Small influxes along the coast in late September and mid-October, Spurn having maxima of ca 30 and 40 respectively. 20 were at Filey on 24th September and 30 at Flamborough on 16th October.

#### Cetti's Warbler Cettia cetti

Seen at one locality on two dates in November.

Grasshopper Warbler Lucustella naevia

More records than for several years at Hornsea Mere and probably bred (RGH). Blacktoft Sands had eight singing birds which was twice the normal number. Eight sang on Thorne Moor and five at Mickletown Ings. Observers in the York area reported an increase in records and the Harrogate/Knaresborough area had relatively good numbers. In contrast, the Leeds report says 'still a relatively scarce bird' and Fairburn Ings had 'a very poor season'.

The earliest birds were from 23rd April when one was on Thorne Moor and at many localities by the month end. A late bird reeled at Staveley Lagoon on 10th September (RE. PTT). One was at Fairburn Ings on 13th September and one at Wath on 18th. Spurn had a very late bird from 14th to 16th October.

#### Savi's Warbler Locustella luscinioides

An exceptional year with birds arriving during late April and May in several counties. One was at Tophill Low Res. from 30th April to 30th May and a second bird present on 25th May (DBr. NAB. GED. et al). One in Dane's Dyke, Flamborough from 15th to 19th May (AG. PAL. IS. DIMW). One at Hornsea Mere from 17th to 23rd May (RGH). One male at Blacktoft Sands from 12th May to 2nd July and a second male from 16th May to 14th June (AG. et al).

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

#### Great Reed Warbler Acrocephalus arundinaceus

One at Spurn on 3rd and 4th June was caught and ringed on the first date (DB. DBa). Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

## Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus

V.C. 61: Spurn had singles on 19th, 26th and 28th May and on four dates to mid-June with one on 21st July and one to two on six dates in August/September and one on 18th October. The Hornsea Mere population appeared stable although no count was undertaken. First to return was one on 19th April and the last on 19th September (RGH). A few passage birds were seen at Flamborough: singles on 26th and 28th May (AG. PAL. IS), and two on 22nd August (AG). Filey had one on 20th August and two on 21st. Bred at Skipwith Common (GS. BC) and Pocklington Canal (three pairs) (TMC).

V.C. 62: Bred successfully at Seamer Road Mere, a nest containing two young being seen in June and four fledged young being fed in the reeds subsequently suggesting either two pairs or a male with two females (RHA. et al). Bred at Castle Howard where there were seven

singing males on 6th June (JHL. AMW. et al).

V.C. 63: ca 400 pairs bred at Blacktoft Sands where the first was on 22nd April and the last on 19th October (AG). 16 males were singing at Mickletown Ings on 4th July and ten pairs bred at Wintersett Res. One at Potteric Carr on 17th April was the county's first bird.

V.C. 64: Two pairs bred at Clifton Water Works, York (MR) and 18 pairs at Askham Bog. 22 pairs bred at Fairburn Ings (SCM). Five singing males counted at Swillington Ings (JW). A few birds occurred away from known breeding sites: one at Allerton Park on 4th May and one at Staveley Lagoon on 28th May, where passage birds occurred in July, two on 2nd and one from 15th to 27th (PTT).

Addition to 1976 Report: One was at Blacktoft Sands on 16th October (AG).

Marsh Warbler Acrocephalus palustris

One caught at Spurn on 4th June. One watched at close range at Flamborough on 8th October was thought to be this species (PAL. IS).

Sedge Warbler Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

There were 55 singing males at Blacktoft Sands in May/June (AG). At least 61 birds (53 singing males) at Wintersett Res. on 14th May and 45 on Thorne Moor on 22nd May. 36 singing males at Mickletown Ings on 29th May, 28 birds at Swillington on 22nd May and 32 on 25th June but only seven pairs were thought to have bred (JW). 80 males sang at Fairburn Ings on 8th May some of which were passage birds as only ca 40 pairs bred (SCM).

Two late birds were at Wheldrake Ings on 29th October.

Aquatic Warbler Acrocephalus paludicola

One at Spurn on 21st/22nd August was caught on the first date (BB. et al). Addition to 1976 Report: One at Spurn from 22nd to 24th September. Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Icterine Warbler Hippolais icterina

An exceptional year: Spurn had one on 27th/28th May at the Warren and a second bird at the point on 28th, with one on 13th June. August produced a flush of birds, the first being at Spurn on 14th whereafter one to three were in the area up to the 23rd with four on 19th. At Flamborough there was one on 15th August and a good series of records thereafter with birds almost daily to the 23rd; maxima were six on 19th, eight on 21st and 14 on 22nd (PAL. IS. AG. et al). Singles were at Kilnsea on 22nd (two on 21st) (SML), Dane's Dyke on 25th (SCM), Hornsea on 30th (WFC), and Filey on 20th and 31st (PJD. HJW). One at Scarborough Castle Hill on 20th September (MF) and one at Easington on 25th (SCM).

Blackcap Sylvia atricapilla

Wintering birds were relatively numerous and occurred at six localities in V.C. 63 during January/February and at eleven in V.C. 64 during January/February and November/December. Some November birds may still be passing through. One was at Scarborough on 27th February and two males visited a bird table at Wass Bank on 1st January and a female on 15th. Normal arrival took place during the second week of April.

Birds passed along the coast up to mid-October and some into November with three at Spurn on 19th and 27th. One frequented the Warren Cottage area from 3rd to 18th

December.

Barred Warbler Sylvia nisoria

A good year for this species and all the favourite coastal watching areas produced birds during August and September. The first was at Spurn on 14th August with one at Fraisthorpe next day (IGH). The next were on the 18th at Spurn and Flamborough (GED) then almost daily at Spurn to 9th September with five on 19th and 23rd August and six on

20th. Up to four from 13th to 17th, one on 22nd and two on 23rd. Flamborough had three on 22nd August, four on 23rd, three on 27th, and singles on 17th and 25th September. Filey had one on 20th August and two on 21st. Singles in Beacon Lane, Kilnsea on 22nd August, 24th to 26th August and 22nd September (SML). One at Ravenscar on 31st August (JW), Hornsea Mere on 10th September (AMA) and Burniston on 13th September (MF).

### Garden Warbler Sylvia borin

Spring passage along the coast was noted at Flamborough with 22 on 18th May and 15 on 28th (PAL. IS). In contrast, Spurn had only singles on three dates in May and on 4th June. In autumn, Flamborough had 12 on 17th August (AG), then 45 on 20th, 40 on 21st, and 50 on 22nd (PAL, AG, IS). Filey also had 14 on 20th and 16 on 21st.

Late birds passed at Spurn into October with the last on 27th.

## Whitethroat Sylvia communis

An early bird at Fairburn Ings on 11th April preceded the next at Tinsley S.F. by nine days. General arrival was during the last week of April. Birds passed at Spurn into late September with two on 1st and 2nd October and one on 6th.

Inland birds lingered into the third week of September with the last at Wintersett Res. and Almholme on 25th and Rigton Moor on 26th.

46 pairs were located at ten sites in the Barnsley area indicating continued recovery.

### Lesser Whitethroat Sylvia curruca

The general arrival was during the first week of May after a few records during the last three days of April. Coastal birds passed into October with the last at Spurn on 12th. One at Flamborough on 8th October showed characters of the Siberian race (DIMW).

## Subalpine Warbler Sylvia cantillans

A male caught at Spurn on 22nd May (PG. DP. JP). A male at Burniston on 25th September (MF).

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

## Dartford Warbler Sylvia undata

One was at Carlton Marsh, near Pontefract from 23rd March to 4th April (DJB. et al). This is the first record in Yorkshire of this rare sedentary species which breeds no nearer than the English south coast.

## Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus

There were some early birds this year, the first being at Potteric Carr on 24th March and at Grantley, near Ripon on 25th. One at Throxenby Mere, near Scarborough on 30th March (MF) and one at Scotton Banks, Knaresborough on 31st (CJH). A few appeared during the first week of April and a small arrival on the 11th when birds were at Adel Dam. Askham Bog and Lindley Res. but the main arrival was between 15th and 20th. 45 singing males at Wintersett Res. on 24th April, 43 on Thorne Moor on 23rd and 59 in Coxley Valley on 25th. 70 pairs bred on Askham Bog. Coastal passage was evident at Spurn and Flamborough during mid- to late August and into September. Some maxima were 150 at Flamborough on 21st August and 80 on 22nd (PAL. IS. AG). 70 at Spurn on 23rd and smaller numbers elsewhere along the coast.

There were several late birds inland; one at Potteric Carr on 3rd October, one at Adel Dam on 30th and one at Fairburn Ings on 20th November, an exceptionally late bird (CW. et al). Stragglers moved along the coast into October with one at Filey on 1st and two at Spurn on 2nd and singles on 7th and 14th.

Birds showing characters of the Northern form *P.t.ocredula* were at Spurn on 17th April (most of the 40 present), one on 24th and 12 caught on 30th.

## Greenish Warbler Phylloscopus trochiloides

One at Flamborough Head from 21st to 23rd August (AG. PAL. IS). Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Chiffehaff Phylloscopus collybita

A good arrival during March, the first being on 9th at Roundhay Park and Ben Rhydding and several localities having birds before the month-end. Some lingered up to early October and late ones were at Flamborough on 5th November and at Fairburn Ings on 13th November. Singles at Worsborough and Carlton Marsh on 19th December. One at Brighouse on 10th December and one on Strensall Common on 26th (IF. HJW). Singles at Cayton Carrs on 10th December and Scarborough on 13th. Spurn had one on 20th November and single phylloscopus on 27th November and 18th December. Two birds caught at Flamborough on 8th October were ascribed to the Siberian race (PAL. IS).

Wood Warbler Phylloscopus sybillatrix

Coastal passage birds were again relatively numerous. Hornsea Mere had singles on 8th. 9th and 13th May and two were at Dane's Dyke on 18th May. Spurn had singles on 1st and 23rd May.

Spurn had more than usual in autumn with one to two on four August dates and three on 28th. Flamborough had birds on most days between 14th and 29th, mainly singles but two on 20th, six on 22nd, five on 23rd, and three on 26th.

## Yellow-browed Warbler Phylloscopus inornatus

Spurn had singles on 20th September, 22nd and 25th to 27th. One was at Flamborough on 23rd September (PAL. IS).

A second influx occurred in early October further north up the coast and singles were at Ravenscar and Staintondale on 5th (MF) and Scarborough Castle Hill had two on 2nd to 4th October with one on 7th (RHA, MF).

## Pallas's Warbler Phylloscopus proregulus

One caught at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 12th October was a fascinating occurrence in a year when there was none along the coast and illustrated the value of regular watching at one site (MLD. POB. JED. et al).

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

## Goldcrest Regulus regulus

55 were at Flamborough on 26th March and 27 were at Spurn on same day. Smaller numbers passed during April. There was no large influx this autumn and daily numbers at Spurn did not exceed 15 (September) and there was no appreciable movement noted elsewhere along the coast except for the Scarborough area on 3rd October (see Yellowbrowed Warbler) when there were 20 on Castle Hill and 40 at Cloughton.

Firecrest Regulus ignicapillus

One at Flamborough on 4th January (DIMW) and one at Spurn on 17th April. Single males were caught inland at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 25th March and 15th April (MLD. et al).

Two at Filey on 25th September (DJB. HJW), two at Spurn on same day and one at Flamborough which was also seen on 26th (PAL. IS).



### Spotted Flycatcher Muscicapa striata

Again, there was a forerunner, this year on 17th April at Turnerwood, Rotherham (AP) followed by one on 30th April at Bell Hole Wood, Halifax, still an early bird five days ahead of the first influx on 5th May. Most had departed in autumn by the third week of September, a late bird being at Adel Dam, Leeds on 2nd October. One on Scarborough Castle Hill on 15th October (IF) would not be of British origin. Spurn had four on 1st October and singles on 7th and 9th.

Coastal passage in autumn was light and the most evident was 35 in one area near Hornsea Mere on 31st August and 20 in another part of Hornsea on same day (RGH. IGH. WFC).

### Pied Flycatcher Ficedula hypoleuca

A pair attempted to breed in a nesting box in Malham Tarn Woods but the eggs were destroyed. This is only the second confirmed breeding record for the area, the other being at Clapham in 1954 (BSh).

Migration on the coast in autumn was heavy during mid-August and a good 'fall' brought maxima of 35 at Spurn and at Flamborough there were 25 on 16th, 80 on 19th, 90 on 21st. 80 on 22nd, and 45 on 23rd (PAL. IS. AG). A second 'fall' on 23rd September brought 14 to Spurn and 30 to Flamborough.

One was on Hatfield Moor on 2nd October when two were at Spurn.

Red-breasted Flycatcher Ficedula parva

One at Flamborough on 19th August was the only bird in that month (PAL. IS). The next was at Flamborough on 19th September with a male on 25th. One at Bempton on 23rd (SR) and Filey on 25th (LMA). One at Scarborough Castle Hill on 25th and 26th September and one at Spurn on 7th and 8th October with one at Flamborough on latter date (DIMW).

Addition to 1976 Report: One at Scalby Mills on 17th September (JH).

**Dunnock** Prunella modularis

Much activity at Spurn on 11th October when 26 were at the 'Narrow Neck' and the species was very obvious on the 13th.

Richard's Pipit Anthus novaeseelandiae

One at Spurn from 16th to 25th October was caught on the 21st (AOA. SML. et al). Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Meadow Pipit Anthus pratensis

Autumn movements at Spurn followed the normal pattern during August to October with daily maxima flying south of 1,500 on 26th September, 4.600 on 27th, 8.500 on 29th, and 4,800 on 30th.

Spring passage was noted at several inland localities with 218 at Fairburn Ings on 25th March and 250 at Gouthwaite Res. on 3rd April as maxima.

Tree Pipit Anthus trivialis

The first was in Moss Valley (V.C. 63) on 11th April and two there on 16th when Potteric Carr, Melton Wood and Auston Stones Wood had singles. General arrival in several other areas was from 18th to 24th April.

Late birds were at Shroggs Park (V.C. 63) on 20th September and Wintersett Res. on 23rd.

Red-throated Pipit Anthus cervinus

One at Spurn on 29th May (NAB. GED. PH. et al). Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Rock Pipit Anthus spinoletta

Occurred inland on several dates during January to May and October to December, mainly singles, at Wintersett Res., Wath Ings, Carlton Marsh, Marley S.F., Withens Res., Ringstone Edge Res., Scout Dike Res., near Settle, Fairburn Ings, Swillington Ings, and Staveley Lagoon.

Birds showing characters of the Scandinavian race A.s.littoralis occurred along the coast in spring with maxima of seven at Hornsea Mere on 19th March (RGH) and three at Flamborough on 16th April (PAL. IS). One was at Burniston on 19th October (MF), two at Flamborough on 20th November and one on 21st (DIMW). Three at Spurn on 26th March and 4th April with one on 5th April.

A Water Pipit A.s.spinoletta occurred at Elland G.P. from 15th January to 8th April by which date it had assumed breeding plumage and another from 6th November to 26th December (DIC. SH. JMD. et al). One was at Wintersett Res. from 25th to 30th October and was caught and ringed (PS. et al). Single birds were seen near Settle on 30th January and 28th February (BSh). Two were at Marley S.F. on 5th February (FAW).

Addition to 1976 Report: Scandinavian race. Add two at Fraisthorpe on 8th April (SML).

Pied Wagtail Motacilla alba

The roost on girders at York Railway Station held 1,500 on 1st February and 1,350 on 22nd November. 132 were on Middlethorpe Ings on 2nd February and 200 entered a roost at Farnley Valley Res. during February and September. There were several roosts in V.C. 63 with one at South Elmsall holding 86 on 22nd March, 100 on 31st July and 300 on 31st August. 300 were at Oakenshaw on 7th October, 200 in Albert Street, Goole on 29th October and 250 on Thorne Moor on 6th November.

Spring passage at Settle S.F. peaked at 150 on 14th April and there were 100 at Harrogate

S.F. on 28th March. 200 were at Gouthwaite Res. during August.

Birds showing characters of the nominate race M.a.alba occurred at many places during spring passage, maxima together being seven at Aldborough S.F. on 24th April (JM) and ten in the Hornsea area on 23rd April (JEA).

Grey Wagtail Motacilla cinerea

Very few seen in V.C. 61 away from Spurn where there were birds regularly in September (23 flew south on seven days with ten on 27th) and fewer to mid-October.

Several pairs bred in V.C. 62 including Falling Foss, Helmsley, Monthorpe and Hackness. Occurrences elsewhere in the county were normal.

Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava

The first were singles at Fairburn Ings, Tophill Low Res. and Broomhill on 14th April, general arrival following quickly during the next few days. Some birds lingered well into October; one at Knostrop S.F. on 9th, singles at Wintersett Res. and Potteric Carr on 22nd and singles at Tophill Low Res. on 20th November and at Wheldrake Ings on 27th November.

Addition to 1976 Report: One was at Wintersett Res. on 31st October.

Blue-headed examples M.f.flava occurred at nine localities in April/May, Spurn having ca 10 individuals. One was at Flamborough on 20th August (PAL. IS).

The Grey-headed Wagtail M.f.thunbergi occurred twice: one at Staveley Lagoon on 13th May (RE. JLCG. PTT) and at Hornsea Mere on 15th May (HJW).

Waxwing Bombycilla garrulus

Very few records indeed with no flocks reported. In the early months, the only ones seen were singles at Huddersfield on 2nd January, another nearby on 14th/16th February, Sheffield on 9th and 14th January, Gargrave on 16th February, Leeds on 26th February, and eight flying north-east at Huddersfield on 18th April. There were some interesting late birds: one at Boston Spa on 28th April, one at Harrogate on 22nd May and one at Knaresborough on 29th May. At the year-end there were singles at five places in November/December with two at Austwick on 27th November and five on a TV aerial at Scalby on 2nd December.

Great Grey Shrike Lanius excubitor

Very few recorded along the coast and V.C. 61 had only six birds: singles at Flamborough and Bempton on 16th and 28th April respectively and singles at Spurn on 17th September, Atwick on 2nd October, Flamborough on 15th October, and Howdendyke on 21st December, V.C. 62 had four singles: Newby on 9th March, Scalby on 26th April, near Scarborough on 28th April and Burniston on 7th October, V.C. 63 had single birds at ten places during January to April and at six places from October to year-end, V.C. 64 had singles at eight places during January to April and at two in December.

## Red-backed Shrike Lanius collurio

In contrast to the last species, 1977 was a good year for Red-backed Shrikes. Coastal localities had birds from 15th May to 19th June, the peak passage being at the end of May when Spurn had up to five and three were at Flamborough on 25th. Singles were at Hornsea Mere on 29th June and 13th July (RHG. IGH. et al).

One at Flamborough on 30th July was the forerunner of a good autumn passage which included 21 on 20th August, 11 on 21st, 25 on 22nd and 23rd, seven on 26th and nine on 27th (PAL. IS. AG). Spurn had similar numbers with 12 on 19th, 20 on 20th, 13 on 21st, and 11 on 22nd. Bempton had five on 27th and 11 on 29th. Filey had its maximum of seven on 21st. Smaller numbers occurred at several other coastal places and a few lingered into mid-September and the last at Spurn on 9th October.

An example of the Isabelline Shrike showing characters of the race L.i.phoenicuroides was at Flamborough Head on 21st August (DIMW). Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

Inland birds occurred near Harrogate on 27th May (male) (AO'N. et al), Fairburn Ings on 28th August and 13th September and near Castleford on 14th September.

## Starling Sturnus vulgaris

Roosts and coastal arrivals during October and November occurred as usual. 11,500 were on Spurn Peninsula on 10th December.

## Hawfinch Coccothraustes coccothraustes

V.C. 61: Singles at Spurn on 19th April and 19th October. One at York University on 14th May (JHL).

V.C. 62: Two at Castle Howard on 19th November (BGP. DB. et al). One at Duncombe Park on 10th May (DJB), one in Scarborough on 21st May (RHA) and two males and a female seen in Commondale during late May (MC).

V.C. 63 and V.C. 64: Most were seen during January to May and October to year end and occurred at 17 localities with breeding confirmed at only three. Maxima seen together were six at Frickley Park in May, six at South Elmsall in October, 16 near Leeds (where one pair nested) during January and 12 near Knaresborough in February (PVI).

## Greenfinch Carduelis chloris

A roost at Hornsea Mere held 450 on 12th December (RGH). 500 were at Knostrop at the end of October. 200 at Creskeld during January to March, 300 at Rodley S.F. on 8th September and 200 at Staveley Lagoon on 20th November. Several other smaller flocks occurred.

Southerly movement occurred as usual at Spurn during October to December some daily maxima being 600 on 25th October, 654 on 6th November, 304 on 19th December and 120 on 22nd.

### Goldfinch Carduelis carduelis

Spurn had unprecedented numbers during the spring passage period, late April and the first half of May. 475 passed on 29th April and 342 on 30th. 2,200 on 10th May. 2,100 on 11th and 1,300 on 15th. 400 were at Flamborough on 18th April. Autumn movement at Spurn during September to November showed some daily maxima of 167 on 29th September, 304 on 11th October and 225 on 23rd and 212 on 4th November. Birds were passing almost daily during the period. 560 were on the Humber Wildfowl Refuge on 9th September, 250 at Filey on 17th September and 250 at Flamborough on 18th September.

Inland flocks in V.C.s 63 and 64 were numerous and sometimes large, several exceeding 100 birds and there were 400 at Potteric Carr on 24th August, 300 at Bishop Monkton on 18th September and 200 at Almholme on 25th September.

Siskin Carduelis spinus

Flocks at both ends of the year were relatively small, the largest being 80 at Strines on 5th February, 89 at Gouthwaite Res. on 3rd December and 65 at Knaresborough Ringing Station on 2nd October when there was an influx into the area.

Several pairs bred in conifer plantations in the south-west of the county and there were

singing males at three localities in the north-east where breeding has occurred.

Spurn had some movement with 87 flying south on 29th October and 67 on 31st, 167 on 6th November and smaller numbers on several other dates during late September to mid-November.

Linnet Carduelis cannabina

A good spring passage at Spurn where a total of 36.567 were counted on 28 days in April and 15.720 on 17 days in May. Daily maxima were 7,000 on 29th April and 3,000 on 7th May. Autumn produced the usual passage, mainly during October when a total of 12.053 was counted over 26 days. Numbers were reduced during November.

Inland flocks were normal and the biggest consisted on ca 200 to 500 birds. Exceptions were 700 at Nosterfield G.P. on 2nd October and 1,000 roosting at Blacktoft Sands on 25th

August.

Twite Acanthis flavirostris

Away from the high ground of the west. Twites were scarce and coastal numbers in winter were very small.

The largest flock reported was 100 near Horton-in-Ribblesdale on 7th September (BSh).

Redpoll Acanthis flammea

Exceptional numbers occurred in Haw Park (V.C. 63) in the early months with 400 on 19th March as maximum but up to 200-300 on several dates. Elsewhere in the county, flocks were numerous but generally did not exceed 100 except for 500 at Askham Bog during September to mid-October.

The breeding population on Hatfield Moor was estimated at 200 pairs.

Passage at Spurn in spring and autumn was light with daily maxima of 100 on 15th May

and 118 on 23rd October.

Some birds showing characters of the Mealy Redpoll A.f.flammea were recorded. Singles at Flamborough on 23rd September and 10th October. One at Staveley Lagoon on 9th April, two near Halifax on 2nd May, and at eight other sites in V.C.s 63 and 64 during October to December, single birds being usual but two at two sites and six near Settle on 26th December.

Addition to 1976 Report: Mealy Redpoll: add one at Rockley on 8th January, up to three at Elland during January to March, two at Blacktoft Sands on 3rd March and one at Treeton on 4th December.

Arctic Redpoll Acanthis hornemanni

Amendment to the 1976 Report: Species entered in error. Delete all reference with apologies to the observer and the British Birds Rarities Committee.

Serin Serinus serinus

One flew south at Spurn on 23rd April.
Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Bullfinch Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Widespread throughout the county in suitable habitat. Several small flocks of up to ten birds during the autumn and winter months. Larger flocks over 50 at Sprotborough Flash on 4th January, 30 at Potteric Carr on 2nd February, 50 at Denaby Ings on 20th November, and 40 near Leeds at the end of December.

A female flew south at Spurn on 3rd April and two on 12th November. One was at the point on 24th October and two on 20th November.

Scarlet Rosefinch Carpodacus erythinus

An immature male in song at Gouthwaite Res. on 25th June (PJC. AO'N). One was at Spurn on 30th August (AOA. JMT. LJD). Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

### Crossbill Loxia curvirostra

V.C. 61: Singles at Spurn on 8th June and 7th October. One at Flamborough on 8th October (AMA). Ten near Wheldrake on 17th October (JHL) and three over Hornsea Mere on 13th November (RGH).

V.C. 62: Two at Cloughton on 9th June (MF), six in Farndale on 26th June (NAB), seven at Sleightholmdale on 31st July (GWF), and three at Levisham on 26th November (BP). Five in Stang Forest on 3rd December (DJB).

V.C. 63: Bred near Strines where there were 11 on 22nd January. 20 at Swinden Plantation on 26th June. Eight in the Upper Little Don Valley on 25th June, two at St. Ives on 8th March and singles at four other localities in autumn.

V.C. 64: Seen regularly at Timble, near Otley with two in February, ten in July and a party of 27 on 23rd October and 29 on 13th November (CGV. et al). Two were at Lindley Res. on 16th June and seven on 14th July (PJC). 18 in Gisburn Forest on 21st August (BSh).

V.C. 65: 15 near Great Shunner Fell on 20th August (FJR).

Chaffinch Fringilla coelebs

Widespread all over the county, flocks of up to 50 being common during the non-breeding season. Larger flocks were: 150 north-west over Cottingham in the evening of 25th February were no doubt going to roost (AMA). 500 in one flock near Scarborough on 20th November (MF) and 200 near Cloughton Pond on 8th December (MF). 150 in Clapham Wood and 200 in Lodge Wood (near Settle) on 1st February (BSh). 150 were in Roundhay Park during March and 200 were at a roost at Creskeld Hall during the same period. 120 at Eccup Res. during December. 300 were in Conyngham Hall grounds, Knaresborough on 30th January. 230 at Gouthwaite Res. on 6th November (PJC) and 300 in Swinton Park on 26th December (AFGW).

Brambling Fringilla montifringilla

V.C. 63 had exceptional flocks: up to 500 at Broomhead during January to mid-April, 500 at Strines on 19th February and 11th April, 600 at Underbank Res. on 27th March, 1,000 at Luddenden Head during January/February, 300 at Ogden Res. during January/February, 400 at Digley during early April, and some small flocks of 100 to 200 at seven other places. One near Wath on 8th June.

V.C. 64: Big numbers during January/February at many localities: 100 at Malham Tarn woods on 11th January, 200 at Adel Dam during January (where 100 roosted in April and a male in summer plumage on 3rd June), 100 at Conyngham Hall, Knaresborough on 31st January, 200 on the Knavesmire, York during January/February. 200 at a roost near Knaresborough in early January, 100 at Arthington on 13th February, 200 in Beckett Park, Leeds during February—April, and 700 in Bramham Park during February. Smaller gatherings were numerous and several birds lingered into May. 142 flew south over Knaresborough

Ringing Station on 9th October (RE) and 300 were in the Roundhay Park/Gledhow area in Leeds during December.

Coastal numbers were small in comparison and the most in one day at Spurn was 82 on 17th October.

Corn Bunting Emberiza calandra

200 at a roost near Wath on 1st February, 150 on 22nd March and 300 on 17th October. 250 roosted at Denaby Ings on 17th December.

There were no large numbers reported in V.C. 64 except for 83 at Fairburn Ings on 1st January and several small flocks in the York area which did not exceed 20 birds.

100 were at Hornsea Mere on 11th January and 80 on 21st February (RGH). 65 at Filey on 17th December.

Occurred throughout the year at Spurn with some southerly movement during spring and autumn.

#### Yellowhammer Emberiza citrinella

The only large number was 400 on Hatfield Moor on 2nd and 12th February and up to 100 in October. Apart from 150 at Ilton, near Masham on 1st February, flocks elsewhere did not exceed 90 birds.

Ortolan Bunting Emberiza hortulana

One at Flamborough on 20th August and two on 30th September were all birds of the year (PAL. IS). One at Spurn on 24th September and one at Cloughton on 10th October (male) (JW).

Reed Bunting Emberiza schoeniclus

Ca 150 pairs bred at Blacktoft Sands and there were large numbers roosting there with 500 during January/February, 750 during October to December with a peak of 1,000 counted on 6th November (AG).

The species was numerous elsewhere in suitable habitat.

150 flew south at Spurn on 25th October and smaller numbers on a few other autumn days.

Lapland Bunting Calcarius lapponicus

A good year, with Spurn having its best autumn when birds were present from 13th September with southerly movement during October, daily maxima being 25 on 13th, 49 on 22nd and 39 on 29th. Elsewhere along the coast numbers were fairly high: 14 at Atwick on 7th October, 12 at Flamborough on 11th and 13 on 13th, 14 at Filey on 26th and 13 on 29th December were maxima.

Smaller numbers occurred in spring along the coast with maxima of six during January in the Barmston/Fraisthorpe area and four at Easington Lagoon in March.

Singles occurred at Blacktoft Sands on 14th and 16th October, 27th November and two on 29th November (AG). Two were inland at Fairburn Ings on 29th October (SML).

Snow Bunting Plectrophenax nivalis

Spurn had up to 39 in January and 23 in February. 50 were in the Kilnsea area during the same period.

First of autumn were on 17th September when Spurn had five and one was at Flamborough. The Easington/Spurn area had up to 50 birds during October/November, increasing in early December to 650 during the latter half. 35 were at Filey on 13th November.

Records elsewhere along the coast were few. 12 were near Skelton, York on 4th November.

V.C. 63 had singles at nine places during January and November/December with up to four at Fly Flatts Res. in late December and three at Dunford Bridge on 27th December.

V.C. 64 had singles at five localities during November/December, two at Staveley Lagoon on 5th January and two males at Farnham Gravel Pit on 25th September (MRS). A male was on Pott Moor in V.C. 65 on 19th August (PY).

White-crowned Sparrow Zonotrichia leucophrys

One at Hornsea Mere on 22nd May followed the first for Britain on Fair Isle six days earlier (RGH. RJW. GCMY). This North American bird was a new species to the county list. Accepted by *British Birds* Rarities Committee.

Tree Sparrow Passer montanus

300 were in Beacon Lane, Kilnsea on 7th January (SML). 150 were at Acaster Malbis during January/February and 100 in April. 250 fed amongst a field of rotting brassica at Swillington on 3rd February (JW). 150 at Thorpe Arch S.F. on 29th October. 100 were at Cherry Cob on 18th December (BSP). Several smaller flocks occurred mainly in V.C.s 63 and 64.

Correction to 1976 Report: Line 4; Burniston should read Barmston.

The following species also occurred in the county during 1977 but the information received did not warrant valid comment or their status remained unchanged during the past three years (see previous Reports).

Little Grebe Tachyboptus ruficollis, Red Grouse Lagopus lagopus, Pheasant Phasianus colchicus, Moorhen Gallinula chloropus, Woodcock Scolopax rusticola, Rock Dove Columba livia, Rook Corvus frugilegus, House Sparrow Passer domesticus.

# **Escaped Birds**

Included in this section are foreign species which are certain to have escaped from captivity. Wildfowl which may or may not have had captive origin appear in the main classified list with the escape proviso.

## Chiloe Wigeon Anas sibilatrix

One at Fairburn Ings from 3rd to 14th August (SCM. et al).

## Bahama Pintail Anas bahamensis

One at Fairburn Ings from 17th August to 9th October (SCM, et al).

## Cape Shelduck Tadorna cana

One at Wheldrake Ings on 1st/2nd October.

## Flamingo Phoenicopterus ruber

One at Ellerton Ings on 2nd April (GS). One *P.r.chilensis* was found dead at Spurn on 21st January and one was present on 9th April.

## Silver Pheasant Lophura nycthemera

A male at Kilnwick Percy on 9th May (JH).

## Golden Pheasant Crysolophus pictus

A male at Pannal, Harrogate on 6th August (GTF).

## Cockatiel Nymphicus hollandicus

One flew south at Spurn on 10th September and was at the point on 11th and 12th.

### Ring-necked Parrakeet Psittacula krameri

Two were at Hornsea Mere from 1st to 22nd January. Only one seen on 23rd and remains of the other found (RGH). One flew south at Spurn on 25th June (DJB) and one flew over Harrogate on 27th January (PTT).

## **Local Reports**

Several local natural history societies and bird clubs now publish their own annual reports and we rely heavily on some of these for the information for the county report. Inevitably, much local detail is lost in the wider context of the county and to facilitate those wishing more information for a particular area, details of those reports submitted to the records committee are published below with an indication of specific lines of study where applicable.

V.C. 63: Barnsley and District Bird Study Group - Classified list and ringing report.

Doncaster and District Ornithological Society – Classified list and ringing report.

Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club – Classified list and ringing report and a note on 'Sex ratios of ducks at Blackmoorfoot Res.'.

Bradford Naturalists' Society - Classified list.

Halifax Scientific Society - Classified list (1976 and 1977).

Sheffield Bird Study Group - 'Magpie' journal includes short papers on 'Magpies in Sheffield, survey of 1976 breeding population'. Recent changes in status of some species in area. Birds of Parks, open spaces, etc., within city. Rookeries 1965–1975. Gulls in Sheffield area. The Tufted Duck at Redmires Res. Notes on Kingfisher behaviour. Fieldfare nesting in South Yorkshire. Apparent decoy behaviour in Cuckoo.

V.C. 64: Castleford and District Naturalists' Society - Short classified list.

Craven Naturalists' and Scientific Association - Classified list in autumn 1978 newsletter.

Fairburn Ings Nature Reserve - Classified list.

Harrogate & District Naturalists' Society - Classified list.

Leeds Birdwatchers' Club - Classified list and Notes on birds of Roundhay Park.

Settle Bird Report - Classified list.

Wharfedale Naturalists' Society - Classified list.

York Ornithologists' Club - Classified list and ringing notes.

Detailed classified lists were also published for the following areas:

Mickletown Ings.

Nostell Dam.

Wintersett Res.

# Some notes on the flight identification of divers in non-breeding plumage

R. H. Appleby and S. C. Madge

## INTRODUCTION

Familiarity with an identification problem can sometimes lead to stagnation in ones approach to it and it would seem that such is the case with regard to divers in flight, many birds being simply logged as diver sp. There is no doubt that all four species occur on the Yorkshire coast in winter, and illustrating the need for a more critical approach to this problem, is best done by referring to the records published by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union 1958–1977 (not including 1967: 68: 69 as yet unpublished). An unprecedented number of Black-throated Divers Gavia arctica occurred on the Yorkshire coast during the winter of 1976/77 and this prompted the writers to produce this short paper in an attempt to aid those who seawatch along our coastline. It would seem that confusion or uncertainty is likely to occur between Great Northern Diver Gavia immer and arctica when faced with either species seen at rest. but in flight between arctica and Red-throated Diver Gavia stellata.

The species for our main discussion here are the two latter and comparisons between them are made.

## VIEWING CIRCUMSTANCES

The circumstances under which divers are usually seen in flight are over the sea and therefore in much more extreme light and weather conditions than are likely on inland waters. We must stress that an observer cannot expect to identify all divers seen in flight. The light and weather conditions can affect judgement of colour and shades, and must be considered at all times; for instances, what may appear as black and white one moment, may appear quite grey in another depending on the source and intensity of the light.

#### STATUS IN YORKSHIRE

The White-billed Diver Gavia adamsii has been recorded on eight occasions, seven of which were of birds found dead or dying. There are no submitted flight records.

The Great Northern G. immer is of annual occurrence. There are 34 flight records during the period 1958–1977.

The true status of the Black-throated Diver G. arctica on the Yorkshire coast is difficult to assess from past records. Taking into account some rather vague references in the late 1950s a total of 115 arctica have been identified between 1958 and 1975. Of those only 22 were determined as such in flight. However, during 1976, 'there were more records than ever before' and 'autumn produced too many to list' (Y.N.U. Ornith. Report 1976). In fact at least 26 were identified as arctica, of which 12 were so determined in flight. An unprecedented number was reported in 1977 with a total of at least 199 individuals, of which 148 were determined in flight. The indication that arctica is now being identified more frequently suggests that it was previously overlooked, misidentified to a far greater degree than realized, or that there has been a significant expansion of the birds breeding range.

The Red-throated Diver G. stellata is the most likely species to be encountered by ornithologists in Yorkshire during the winter, and is the most readily identified. Large movements and rafts are often observed at coastal localities, on occasions involving hundreds of birds.

#### FLIGHT IDENTIFICATION

Black-throated Diver: Typically rather larger and more heavily built than stellata. The neck is stouter, tending to make the head appear relatively small for the bird. The wing beat is subtly shallower and slower and seems to be more of a low level flyer than stellata, often giving the impression of a bird about to settle. Wings appear to be rather broader based than stellata, probably due to, or accentuated by, the darker flanks, and being more central with equal amounts of body fore and aft. Although the neck is held straighter, the head itself looks

drooped with an obviously straight bill which often appears darkish or blackish in colour and distinctly blunt ended, especially at a distance due to the darker tip and is never held up in flight. The dark plumage of the crown and neck is more extensive than in *stellata*, with a much deeper cap reaching to below eye level through the ear coverts, in profile dividing the neck into more equal amounts of dark and white. This gives a clean-cut black and white appearance. The extent to which the dark plumage comes well round to the sides of the neck gives *arctica* a decidedly hump-backed appearance. The deeper cap accentuates the white cheeks as opposed to the complete white face of *stellata*. The whole appearance is of a more clean cut black and white bird than *stellata* with dark flanks which break the white of the body from the white underwing coverts, a diagnostic feature in winter (see Fig 1). A cautionary note: This latter feature is shared by *immer* which is a much larger and bulkier bird in flight, with slow goose-like wing beats.

Red-throated Diver: The smallest and most delicately built of the group, even large individuals retaining a slim appearance. The foreparts are less heavy and completely lack the clean cut black-and-white appearance of arctica. The wings appear to be set a little farther back on the body than in arctica and the wing beat is subtly faster and deeper. Even in flight, as on the water, stellata tends to hold the bill upwards accentuating an uptilted appearance that is quite noticeable at reasonable range. Bill always appears pale in colour. Because of the tendency to hold the head up in flight stellata has a somewhat fat cheeked appearance. The head is neat and small on a drooped neck. Although the latter is variable as in arctica, stellata never appears hump-backed, apparently for the following reasons: Crown, nape and hind neck are grey, this area being confined to a stripe down the neck and the very cap of the head. The whole face, as opposed to cheeks in arctica. flanks, underwing coverts and underparts, are white. These features combined produce a pale appearance which tend to merge into the background of sea or sky. Wings, mantle (and tail to lesser degree) appear much darker than the rest of the bird which produces a headless appearance over the sea, sometimes giving the impression of a pair of wings flying along.

When moulting out of or into breeding plumage and acquiring dark feathering on the foreneck, *stellata* can appear bulkier on the neck than in winter plumage. First-winter birds are also browner on head, neck and flanks than adults.



BLACK-THROATED

FIGURE 1
Sketches of Red-throated and Black-throated Divers G.stellata and arctica showing main visible plumage differences in flight. Drawn by S. C. Madge.

#### ON THE WATER

Experience has shown that even quite experienced observers can become confused when faced with a stray *arctica* or *immer* on some inland water. It would seem opportune therefore to include some of the more salient distinguishing features of birds at rest.

When diving actively arctica can appear almost as elegant as stellata, conversely whilst resting it can appear almost as bulky as immer. The head of arctica is often held up slightly which could lead to thoughts of stellata if other features are not taken into consideration. The head shape of arctica is gently rounded and quite different to the more angular head shape of immer.

In *immer*, the lower neck has small pale areas which are a ghost of the breeding plumage neck patches. The crown and nape are blacker than the upperparts in *immer*, the reverse being the case in *arctica* and this feature alone is very useful and normally quite apparent at long ranges in good light. The flanks are dark in both *arctica* and *immer*, although more streaked with whitish in the latter species and *arctica* usually has a clean-cut white patch on the rear flanks near the tail which is never as cleanly marked in *immer*, although the latter may often have a similar whitish area here. In juveniles, the distribution of pale edges to the mantle feathers is quite different, being confined to the scapulars in *arctica* and evenly distributed over the whole mantle in immer.

#### SUMMARY

The field identification of Black-throated Diver in flight is discussed, mainly in relation to Red-throated Diver. These notes are a summary of our personal observations on the separation of the two species in flight in non-breeding plumage with some relevant notes on birds at rest in relation to Great Northern Diver. It is hoped that this short paper will encourage observers to be more critical when faced with flying divers and we sincerely hope that our attempt to clarify some of the obvious problems will create discussion, criticism and fresh ideas, all of which are welcome.

As we are working on a more comprehensive paper on this subject to include all four divers in all plumages, we would particularly like to hear from observers who are familiar with Great Northern Divers and even more so, White-billed Divers, in flight.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank the vice-county recorders of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union for extracting records from their files, and to John R. Mather for helpful comments.

#### REFERENCES

Madge, S. C. (1965) Black-throated Divers in winter plumage. Devon Birds. October 1965.
Parrack, J. D. (1965) Identification of Divers. Tyneside Bird Club Annual Report 1964.
Porter, R. F. et al (1964) Diver Movements off Selsey Bill. Sussex Bird Report 1963.
Wallace, D. I. M. (1977) in Cramp et al. Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol I.

R. H. Appleby 38 Tennyson Avenue Scarborough North Yorkshire S. C. Madge 1 Caudle Hill Fairburn Knottingley West Yorkshire

## The Need for Field Descriptions

It is our aim to continue to present these reports with complete accuracy in order that those who use them in the future may accept the records of all species without doubt or query.

To maintain this accuracy contributors are reminded that all records of rare or uncommon and difficult species are considered by the Reports Committee before being accepted for publication or forwarded to British Birds for their decision.

The work of the Reports Committee can be reduced considerably if observers will submit descriptions as soon as possible after the bird has been seen. Details should be the description taken in the field, before reference to any text books, and should include the locality, date and time, habitat, weather conditions, optical aids used, etc. Forms, based upon the form accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committees, can be obtained from any Vice-County Recorder for submitting details of any of the species listed below:

## Uncommon and Difficult Species

Black-throated Diver Great Northern Diver Red-necked Grebe Slavonian Grebe Black-necked grebe Leach's Petrel Storm Petrel Great Shearwater

Bittern Spoonbill Red-crested Pochard

Ferruginous Duck Smew Bean Goose Snow Goose

Golden Eagle

Rough-legged Buzzard

Goshawk Kite

Honey Buzzard

Osprey Hobby

Spotted Crake Kentish Plover

Dotterel

Temminck's Stint

Pectoral Sandpiper Grev Phalarope Red-necked Phalarope

Stone Curlew Long-tailed Skua Pomarine Skua

Iceland Gull Glaucous Gull

Mediterranean Gull

Sabine's Gull Roseate Tern Black Guillemot Wood Lark Golden Oriole Chough Bluethroat Marsh Warbler Icterine Warbler Melodious Warbler

Yellow-browed Warbler Barred Warbler

Firecrest

Red-breasted Flycatcher

Cirl Bunting Ortolan Bunting Lapland Bunting

#### **British Birds Rarities**

All rarities requiring submission to the British Birds Rarities Committee, last listed in British Birds, Vol. 67, 1974, pages 347-8.

#### Races

All well-defined races of common species, e.g.: Blue-headed Wagtail, Water Pipit.

Descriptions should normally be furnished in support of records of migrant birds seen out of season, and commoner birds seen in unusual circumstances.

List of contributors whose initials appear in the classified list (with apologies for omissions). Very many others contributed and the summaries in this report would have been impossible to assess without their records.

D. Abbott; L. M. Adinall; J. E. Adlard; A. M. Allport; C. E. Andrassy; M. S. Appleby; R. H. Appleby; A. Archer; J. S. Armitage; J. Atkin; Miss J. E. Atkinson; B. Banson; D. Barraclough; T. Bassingdale; J. Baxter; J. M. Bayldon; J. Beaumont; N. A. Bell; F. D. Bell; G. R. Bennett; C. Bielby; M. Binns; A. B. Blake; A. G. and M.E. Blunt; C. Bower; D. Bower; D. Braithwaite; P. Bray; D. J. Britton; M. F. Brown; D. Bryan; R. W. Bullock; H. O. Bunce; A. S. Butler; B. Caffrey; P. J. Carlton; D. Carrol; N. Carter; G. Catley; M. Chadwick; F. Chambers; A. Chapman; L. Chapman; T. D. Charlton; C. R. Clark; K. Clarkson; T. M. Clegg; B. Cockerill; M. Corner; D. I. Crawshaw; A. Credland; J. Cudworth; W. F. Curtiss; D. B. Cutts; J. E. and S. M. Dale; J. M. Dale; B. Davies; L. J. Degnam; A. and J. Dennison; M. L. Denton; L. G. Dewdney; R. F. Dickens; I. H. Dillingham; T. E. Dixon; G. E. Dobbs; S. Downhill; P. Dove; F. C. Draper; P. J. Dunn; T. Ede; I. Edgar; R. Evison; Miss J. Fairhurst; B. Fendley; G. W. Follows; G. T. Foggitt; D. Ford; I. Forsyth; C. Francis; I. Francis; M. Francis; H. M. Frost; M. G. H. Garnett; R. Gilbert; T. Goodwin; L. Gould; G. Grainger; P. Greaves; J. Green; A. Grieve; A. M. Grimshaw; I. Hall; Mrs J. Hall; R. G. Hawley; C. D. R. Heard; D. M. Henderson; D. Herringshaw; M. Herring; C. J. Hespin; J. Hewitt; S. Hey; S. Higgins; P. Higson; C. M. Hind; D. G. Hobson; G. Hodges; S. Holliday; I. G. Howard; P. Hutchinson; R. A. Innes; J. R. Irving; P. V. Irving; P. J. Izzard; N. Jackson; S. L. James; P. Kirk; R. Knight; J. Lawrence; P. A. Lassey; J. H. Lawton; G. Lee; N. Leece; M. Limbert; S. M. Lister; V. A. Lister; M. Lynes; S. C. Madge; M. Marshall; J. Martin; J. I. Martin; R. K. Martin; J. R. Mather; P. Metheringham; J. Miles; K. Moir; G. D. Moore; D. E. Murray; B. Newby; A. O'Neill; Miss J. Owen; D. Page; J. Palmer; A. Parker; J. and B. Parkin; B. S. Pashby; A. Paterson; K. Pearson; B. G. and J. M. Pepper; G. Pleasance; B. E. Prater; D. M. Pullan; S. Ralph; M. Rawcliffe; M. Richardson; M. G. Richardson; F. J. Roberts; A. G. Rogers; S. Rooke; K. Rotherham; R. Scott; D. P. Sharp; B. Shorrock; S. P. Singleton; C. Slater; G. Smith; Miss I. Smith; P. Smith; R. Smith; G. J. Speight; B. R. Spence; M. Spence; K. G. Spencer; D. J. Standring; C. Straker; R. G. Sturman; Miss A. Summersgill; D. J. Sutcliffe; R. Swales; F. Symonds; S. Taylor; L. Thickett; C. B. Thomas; C. and M. J. A. Thompson; F. J. Thompson; B. Townend; Miss A. Townson; P. T. Treloar; B. Tucker; J. M. Turton; A. Walker; A. F. G. Walker; R. J. Walker; C. Wall; D. I. M. Wallace; A. J. Wallis; A. W. Wallis; J. Ward; D. Waudby; C. H. Wear; Miss J. Webb; R. Wells; H. J. Whitehead; F. A. Whitford; M. Williams; A. M. Wilson; C. Winn; E. Wood; P. B. Wordsworth; P. M. Wright; A. Wrighton; G. C. M. Yates; P. Young.



